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IMPORTANT POINTS

OF

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY

MAINTAINED AND DEFENDED;

IN SEVERAL

SERMONS AND OTHER DISCOURSES.

BY

GEORGE BULL, D.D.

SOMETIME LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S.

OXFORD,

JOHN HENRY PARKER.

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SERMON I.

THE NECESSITY OF WORKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IN ORDER TO SALVATION; THOUGH THE REWARD OF THEM IS ONLY TO BE EXPECTED FROM THE FREE GRACE AND MERCY OF GOD: ASSERTED AGAINST THE ANTINOMIANS AND PAPISTS.

HOSEA x. 12.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy.

IN the preceding verses of the chapter, God sharply reproves and severely threatens Israel for their wickedness, especially their idolatry. But the good God, always in judgment remembering mercy, to those reprehensions and menaces subjoins here in my text an exhortation to repentance and amendment of life, enforced with a gracious promise of mercy upon such repentance.

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy.” Which words (not to spend time needlessly in any farther preface) I shall first briefly explain, and then raise such plain, practical, and useful observations from them, as they naturally and without straining afford.

First, for the explanation of the text. It is obvious, to observe in general, that the verse, out of which my text is taken, contains an exhortation to repentance and a good life, expressed under the metaphors of ploughing and sowing; and also a promise of mercy, under answerable metaphors of rain upon the seed sown, and of reaping a joyful harvest. “Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy: break up the fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain

righteousness upon you." But I am concerned at present to explain only the beginning of the verse, which I have pitched on for the subject of my discourse at this time.

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness." The sowing of seed is a metaphor used in Scripture, to signify the doing of those moral exercises and works, by which (according as the quality of them is, as they are good or bad) men are to expect from God either reward or punishment. "To sow in righteousness," therefore, is nothing else but to live righteously, to do righteous actions, that is, works of piety towards God, and of justice and charity towards our neighbour. For righteousness here, is not only just and righteous dealing towards men, but it is *virtus universalis*, "an universal virtue," containing in it all other virtues. In this comprehensive sense, it is often taken in Scripture: as, for example; "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness^a." "The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way, but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them; but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness^b." "They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever^c." "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven^d." And that in this large sense it is to be understood here, is evident, because the exhortation, "Sow in," or "unto, righteousness," requires an universal reformation, conversion, and turning to God. It is a calling of the Israelites to a general repentance, not only of their unjust dealings, but of all those other sins, with which God had before charged them. And besides, to the command, "Sow in righteousness," is presently added, in the verse out of which my text is taken, "Break up the fallow ground;" where by "the fallow ground," is meant the unregenerate heart, the heart that is void of virtue, and overrun with vice: as it is expressly expounded; "For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your

^a Psalm xi. 7.

^b Prov. xi. 5, 6.

^c Dan. xii. 3.

^d Matt. v. 20.

heart^e," &c. Now, to break or plough up the fallow ground of our hearts, is by the exercises of mortification, to subdue and root up our vicious inclinations, that so our hearts may be made fit soil, and prepared to receive the seeds of virtue. The sowing, therefore, in righteousness here commanded, is of a wider extent, than to be confined only to works of justice, strictly so called; and signifies the practice of all virtues, for which our hearts, being cultivated by the forementioned exercises, are fitted and disposed.

"Reap in mercy." Where Grotius and others note, that in the Scripture language, *Seminare est bene agere; metere referre mercedem*: "To sow is to do well; to reap is to receive the reward of so doing."

The words, though they are delivered imperatively, yet are a plain promise; as if it had been said, "Sow in righteousness," and then you shall "reap in mercy." For it is usual in Scripture for the Divine promises to be delivered in the imperative mood, to signify, that if that be done which God commands, His promise is sure and certain, and presently performed: there remains no more to do, but, as it were, to put forth the hand and gather the fruit, and receive the effect of the promise: to this purpose, see Isaiah lv. 2. "Wherefore do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

To "reap in mercy," is to receive the reward of righteousness from the free and abundant goodness and mercy of God. Indeed, some think the mercy here spoken of, may be understood of human mercy, or the exercise of mercy by men to men; and so, that to "reap in mercy," is to receive our reward according to the mercy we have shewn to others. This interpretation (it is confessed) contains a sound truth, and is safe enough; but I choose rather to go with the stream of the most learned interpreters, who expound the mercy here mentioned, of the Divine mercy, the mercy of God, the fountain from whence the reward of all our righteousness flows. And certainly the virtue of human mercy is comprehended under that universal righteous-

• Jer. iv. 3, 4.

ness mentioned in the former clause, "Sow to yourselves in righteousness," and is part of the duty of man there enjoined; but the merey here mentioned, belongs to the promise of reward, or the reaping of the fruit of that righteousness from God, and so is most fitly understood of the Divine merey.

And this may suffice for the explanation of my text, the sense whereof now appears to be this: Do and practise the works of righteousness, of piety to God, and of justice and charity towards men, and you shall certainly receive the reward of that righteousness from the merey of God, an abundant reward, suitable to the infinite goodness and merey of God, that bestows it. I now proceed to raise my observations from the text, which are these two:

Observ. 1. We must not expect to reap in merey, unless we sow in righteousness; that is, we must not hope for the gracious reward which God hath promised, without the practise of those works of righteousness which God hath commanded.

Observ. 2. When we have sown in righteousness, that is, done righteous works, we must not plead any merit of our own in having so done, but must look for the reward of our righteousness, only from the free grace and merey of God.

Of these in their order: and first, of the first. We must not expect to reap in merey, unless we sow in righteousness, &c.

For the order in my text is to be observed; first, "sow in righteousness," and then, (not before, or otherwise,) "reap in merey." It would be as absurd for a man to expect that God's merey should save him without works of righteousness, as for the husbandman to look for a harvest without ever ploughing and sowing his ground. He were a madman in his husbandry that should do this, and he is no less infatuated in his religion that doth the other. The same thing under the same metaphor, St. Paul teacheth us. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting^f." Which great truth, the Scripture delivers in proper terms, when it tells us, (as it often doth,) that God will "render to, or reward, every man according to his works." "Without

^f Gal. vi. 7, 8.

holiness no man shall see the Lord," saith the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews^g. Without a holy life here, no man ought to expect or hope for a happy life hereafter.

God, indeed, is infinitely good and merciful, and it is out of that infinite goodness and mercy, that He bestows the gift of eternal life upon any man; but God is also infinitely wise, and righteous, and holy; and therefore He will not (I think I may say He cannot) confer the rich donative upon any unholy or unrighteous person. St. Paul seems to count it strange, that any Christian, any man, that hath been taught the truth as it is in Jesus, should either not know, or not believe, or not consider this. For thus he bespeaks his Corinthians; "Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God^h:" as if he had said, Is it possible you should be ignorant of so great a truth as this, so often and so plainly taught you by the Gospel of Christ? Certainly if you know not this, you know nothing in Christianity. And yet, alas! in this our age, how many, among those that call themselves Christians, seem to be wholly ignorant of this great fundamental principle of our religion! A principle more fundamental (if I may so speak) than any article of our creed; for all those articles are fundamental only in order to this; that is, they are necessary to be believed, because they have an influence upon our practices; and without the belief of them, we cannot reasonably live a Christian life. They, therefore, that are ignorant of, or disbelieve the necessity of a holy life, are ignorant of or deny that article, upon the supposition of which the necessity of all other articles of our religion depends. He, indeed, that thinks himself not obliged by the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, as expounded by our Saviour Christ, may at the same time as reasonably throw away his whole creed. For if it be not necessary to live according to the precepts of Christ, it cannot be necessary to believe any proposition or doctrine in Christianity. If there be no danger in an ill life, there can be no danger in a wrong belief. And

^g Chap. xii. 14.

^h 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

yet, I say, how many are there, among those on whom the name of Christ is called, and who glory in that name, who seem not yet convinced or persuaded of this great and manifest article! It is a sad truth, (but a truth it is,) that the very principles of Christianity are perverted and corrupted by the professed disciples of that religion, yea, (which is yet worse,) by the very doctors and teachers of it too. And here

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra.

Protestants and Papists are both to blame. To begin with ourselves first. Among us Protestants, there have been many (too, too many) that have taught for pure, yea, the purest Gospel, such doctrines as these; "That the faith whereby we are justified, is nothing else but a recumbence or reliance upon Christ, or (which is a worse definition) that it is only a firm belief and persuasion that our sins are already pardoned, and we already justified; and, consequently, that the justification spoken of in Scripture, is nothing else but the sense and knowledge of our justification past, decreed from eternity: that Christ obeyed the law, and suffered in our persons, and that His righteousness is formally ours; and, consequently, that there is no necessity of any righteousness in ourselves in order to our salvation: that the moral law" (though Christ Himself hath taken the pains to explain and press it on us) "concerns not us Christians, as a law obliging us *sub periculo animæ*, 'under penalty of damnation;' but is only a contrivance to frighten sinners, to convince them of their sins, and to shew them their impotence and weakness; that we are to work not for life, but from life, as they phrase it; and, consequently, that all our good works are (after a sort) works of supererogation, to which no necessity obligeth us, but only gratitude freely inclines us." The men that taught these sad propositions, were called Antinomians; whose name indeed is now every where odious and decried; but the doctrines themselves have taken such deep root in the hearts of the people, (who greedily entertained them, as grateful and pleasing to their carnal appetites,) that multitudes still perish upon the confidence of the same principles. And there being some obscurer places of Holy Writ, that seem to sound this way, and to favour the forementioned errors, they pertinaciously adhere

to them; though there be five hundred texts of Scripture, that in the most express and plainest terms, teach the contrary. Yet (God be thanked) I know of no Protestant Church, of any denomination whatsoever, that openly avoucheth any of those doctrines. I am sure, our Church of England is far from doing so: they are the errors, or heresies rather, of certain private and unlicensed doctors, who took occasion to sow their tares, not when our watchmen slept, but when they were by a tyrannical power silenced, and driven from their charges, in the time of usurpation. And the same men, (when they are now not only not licensed, but themselves forbidden to preach,) are the only men that still maintain and strenuously propagate those pernicious doctrines in their schismatical assemblies.

But having done this justice to ourselves, let us next call the Papists to account. The Church of Rome, I say, the very Church of Rome, teacheth and avoweth such doctrine, as evidently and utterly destroys the necessity of a holy life, and encourageth men to hope they shall “reap in mercy,” though they “sow” not to themselves “in righteousness.” Such is that doctrine of theirs, “That a man by attrition, or such a sorrow for sin as ariseth only from fear, and is void of charity and the love of God above all things, with the help of the sacrament of Penance, that is, of confession to and absolution from a Priest, may obtain the pardon of his sins, justification, and eternal life.” This dangerous proposition, the Council of Trent doth plainly enough assert, in the fourth chapter of the fourteenth session, concerning Contrition. But in the Roman Catechism, (which was allowed and published by the order of the Trent Fathers and Pope Pius the Fifth, and is therefore as much their doctrine as any thing decreed by them in their sessions,) it is so manifestly delivered, that there is no room for contradiction, in the fifth chapter of the second part of the Sacrament of Penanceⁱ. The sum of their doctrine there, is plainly this; “That true contrition, joined with the love of God above all things, is indeed a thing very desirable, and most acceptable to God, even without the sacrament of Penance; but because very few have this true contrition, that therefore God, out of His infinite mercy and indulgence, hath provided for the common salvation of men in a

ⁱ [Page 223, and the following, according to the edition of Antwerp, 1606.]

more easy way." They are the very words of the Catechism, wherein the Fathers seem to have forgotten the words of our Saviour, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it^k." And that, therefore, He hath appointed the sacrament of Penance, as a help or crutch to a lame and defective repentance, as a supply to their contrition and sorrow for sin, wherein the love of God above all things, is wanting.

Need I now to shew the danger of this doctrine? It is indeed a doctrine so dangerous, so damnable, that it seems of itself sufficient to unchristian and unchurch any society of men that shall teach and maintain it. It razeth the very foundations of the Gospel: it takes away those two great hinges, upon which (as our Saviour Himself tells us) all the Law and Prophets depend and turn; viz. the love of God above all things, and of our neighbours as ourselves, for God's sake. For these, according to this doctrine, are not necessary: the rare device of the sacrament of Penance can reconcile men to God without them; and by this expedient, men that never loved God with all their hearts, in all their days on earth, may for ever enjoy God in heaven. People may expiate their sins at this rate of a servile attrition, *toties quoties*, as often as they commit them, and so be saved, without ever having loved God above all things in their lives. But the danger of this doctrine will more evidently appear, if we apply it to such as are *in agone mortis*, at the point of death. Suppose a man to have lived in a course of wickedness for fifty or sixty years, and being now upon his deathbed, to be attrite for his sins, that is, heartily to grieve for them only out of the fear of hell, (and he is a bold man indeed that will not in earnest fear hell when it gapes upon him, and is ready to devour him,) and in that fear to purpose amendment of life, if God restore him, and to have a hope of pardon; (and in so comfortable a Church as the Roman, who hath any reason to despair?) this man, according to the doctrine of the Council of Trent, though he cannot be saved without the sacrament of Penance, yet with it he may.

If he hath but breath enough to tell the Priest the sad story of his vicious life, and beg absolution, he can do wonders for

^k Matt. vii. 14.

him, more than God Himself ever promised: he can, by pronouncing only a few words over him, presently translate him from death to life; and make him, that was all his life before a child of the devil, in one moment the son of God, and an heir of salvation.

Let not, therefore, the Church of Rome boast any more of the strictness and severity of her doctrine; and that she especially presseth good works, and the necessity of a holy life; when it is apparent, that by such loose propositions as these, she utterly destroys that necessity. Indeed it may be truly affirmed, that there is no society of Christians in the world, where Antinomianism and libertinism more reign, than among the Papists, into whose very faith they are interwoven, and men are taught them by the definitions of their Church. It is no wonder so many vicious persons, especially when they come to die, turn Papists, and no visitants are so welcome to them as the Roman Confessors. They find them very easy and comfortable doctors for men in their desperate case, and admire their rare invention, who have found out a shorter way to heaven, and a readier one to escape hell and damnation, than the Scriptures ever discovered, or their former Ministers of the Church of England, following the guidance of the Scriptures, durst warrant to them. And what broken plank, yea, what flag or reed, will not a drowning man lay hold on? O how pleasant a thing is that which they call the bosom of the Roman Church! how willingly do those forlorn wretches cast themselves into it! where they are promised, and in their own deluded imaginations enjoy, that rest and security, which they could not any where else, no, not in the word and promises of God, find. But, alas! when they thus say Peace, peace unto themselves; behold sudden destruction cometh upon them, and within a minute after they are launched out into eternity, a sad and dreadful experience convinceth them what a sorry refuge they fled to.

It is evident, that the Church of Rome, in teaching this vile doctrine, aims only at her own interest and advantage, and hath no regard at all to the honour of God, and the good of souls. It is absolutely necessary, she saith, for a sinner to make an auricular confession to, and be absolved by, a Priest, though

God hath no where said so: but it is not necessary for him to be contrite, or to repent of his sins out of the love of God, though God Himself, in His own word, hath an hundred times said it is. That is necessary for the honour and gain of the Priest. The trade of auricular confession must by any means be kept up, because from thence they reap no small gain; and besides, by it they govern, not only the silly common people, but great men, and kings, and princes, by becoming masters of their secrets. But is not the doctrine of true contrition as necessary for the honour of God? Yes; but the promoting of God's glory in the salvation of souls, is the least of their design or business. Indeed it were easy to shew, how the whole frame of the religion and doctrine of the Church of Rome, as it is distinguished from that Christianity which we hold in common with them, is evidently designed and contrived to serve the interest and profit of them that rule that Church, by the disservices, yea, and ruin of those souls that are under their government.

What can the doctrine of men's playing an aftergame for their salvation in purgatory be designed for, but to enhance the price of the Priest's masses and dirges for the dead? Why must a solitary mass, bought for a piece of money, performed and participated by a Priest alone, in a private corner of a church, be, not only against the sense of Scripture and the primitive Church, but also against common sense and grammar, called a Communion, and be accounted useful to him that buys it, though he never himself receive the Sacrament, or but once a year; but for this reason, that there is great gain, but no godliness at all, in this doctrine? Why in their public Eucharists, must the Priest only receive in both kinds, and the people be put off with a piece of a sacrament, against the plainest texts of Scripture, and the practice of the Catholic Church, for at least a thousand years after Christ, (as some of the Romanists themselves have confessed,) but that this tends to the advancement of the honour and estimation of the Priest, as being alone qualified to offer up an entire sacrifice of Christ's body and blood? The sacrilegious practice, indeed, came in first upon the pretence of the doctrine of Transubstantiation; but interest afterwards confirmed the practice. Nay, their very monstrous

doctrine of Transubstantiation, though it seems to be fallen on by chance, in a most ignorant age, evidently serves the same design.

Again; to what purpose is there feigned a treasury of the merits of saints in the Church of Rome, and that under the Pope's lock and key, but to fill his treasury with money? And who hath not heard of their indulgences of pardon to the greatest sins and sinners, openly set to sale, and made a trade of? I might pursue the argument farther, if time would permit; but this is sufficient to shew, by the way, that gain, not godliness, is the design of the Roman Church; yea, that their gain is their godliness, as St. Paul said of some in his time¹. And, therefore, that we are concerned to take heed to what follows in the same place, "from such withdraw." Indeed Christianity, the best of religions, is, as they have taught it, truly become what one of their Popes is said to have called it, only a gainful fable. But I return thither, from whence I have somewhat digressed.

The Church of Rome, I say, falsely glories in her being zealous for good works; seeing, as it appears, she evidently, and many ways, destroys the necessity of them. And yet very many among us are so foolish as to believe the pretence; yea, and to make the preaching up of good works a character of a Papist. He is a Papist, say they, for he presseth good works; and hence they themselves sit down in an openly vicious, or a careless conversation, in a life either fruitful of wicked works, or barren of good ones; pleasing themselves with I know not what faith, and esteeming themselves the truest Protestants in so doing. But what an honour do they hereby do the Papists! What a slur do they cast on the Reformed Churches! To undeceive these men in this grand mistake, let me inform them of this one thing; that the Papists are indeed mighty zealous for external works, and works of their own devising, but the most regardless men in the world of those substantial and truly good works, which God hath commanded. They vehemently urge people to their beads, and the repeating of Ave Marys and Pater Nosters, to external abstinences and penances, (if they find them apt to receive their discipline,) to pilgrimages and

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 5.

offerings at the shrines of saints, to the endowment of monasteries and religious houses, as they call them, to a multitude of superstitious fopperies and ceremonies, that require so much time and care for their performance, as to eat out the very heart and life of true piety. And those that will do this drudgery of theirs, (and what will not men do to be freed from the hard task of inward piety?) they can easily excuse from the truly good and essential works of religion; yea, and persuade them to a presumption of meriting heaven, though in the mean while, they are apparently men of unmortified affections and vicious lives; especially if they are zealous for the Catholic cause, and against those whom they are pleased to call heretics. Nay, if they have this zeal, they will forgive them all the rest. This zeal shall be a fiery chariot, to convey even the murderers of their princes, with Elias, to heaven; and make them canonized for saints, and give them a name in the Roman Calendar, as red as the blood they have spilled. It is true, some good men there are in the Papacy, and, as well as they can, declaring against this wretched corruption of Christianity among them. But the common, current, ruling, and prevailing religion of the Church of Rome, is certainly such as I have described.

But now the true reformed religion, (I am sure that of the Church of England,) teacheth men the necessity of works truly good, of true contrition for their sins, of mortifying their sinful and carnal affections, of all the substantial works of piety, justice, and charity. It teacheth men not to expect heaven and salvation without these; but yet not to think of meriting heaven by them. It plainly teacheth, that for a man to be a protestant against Popery, will not serve his turn, unless he equally protest against the sin and wickedness of the world: that to be a member, by profession, of a reformed Church, will not save his soul, unless himself be truly reformed in his life and conversation. And if men after all this, live vicious lives, as too, too many among us do, they have not the least countenance from the doctrine of the Church wherein they live, but are continually under her severe reprehensions and reproofs, and are not suffered to live quietly in their sins; so that if they perish, it is purely their own fault and folly.

To conclude this matter; it is a very difficult task for men to

persuade themselves to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, though they are rightly principled, and convinced of the necessity of so doing. What a case then are they in, whose very principles lead them to a vicious life; whose very minds, understandings, and notions of things, are corrupted; who are not yet convinced of the necessity of a holy life! “If the light within thee be darkness,” saith our blessed Lord, “how great is that darkness^m!” It is impossible for men of such ill principles to live well, unless either their understandings be so weak as not to discern their consequences, (and then their weakness is their happiness,) or else a very strong inclination to virtue, and a mighty grace in them, conquer and overcome the venom and poison of them.

Wherefore, my dear brethren, let no man deceive you with vain words, but hearken to the word of God, which tells you, that you must not expect to “reap in mercy,” unless you “sow to yourselves in righteousness.” Let never either Jesuit or fanatic, persuade you to the contrary. Fix and settle in your minds such plain texts of Scripture as these: “Except ye repent, ye shall all perishⁿ.” “Follow peace and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord^o.” “God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, &c. but glory, honour, and peace, to every one that worketh good. For there is no respect of persons with God^p.” Fix, I say, and settle these and such like places of Holy Scripture in your minds and memories, and let no sophistry of men or devils ever baffle or dissuade you from so plain a truth. Nay, let not your own hearts deceive you, as they will be apt to do, either by causing you to divert your thoughts from these express declarations of God’s will, or to seek out shifts and evasions to elude them. But often call to mind, meditate, and think on, these Scriptures. Let them con-

^m Matt. vi. 23.ⁿ Luke xiii. 3.^o Heb. xii. 14.^p Rom. ii. 6—11.

tinually haunt your souls, (if I may so speak,) and never suffer you to be at rest, till you have resolved upon a holy life, and engaged yourselves in it. And then happy, thrice happy, shall you be; and after you have sown to yourselves in righteousness, a glorious harvest shall you reap from the mercy of God. And this leads me to the second observation from my text, which I shall briefly despatch, and so conclude.

Observ. 2. When we have sown in righteousness, that is, done righteous works, we must not plead any merit of our own in having so done; but must look for the reward of our righteousness, only from the free grace and mercy of God.

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy.” The reward of the righteous man, is every where in Scripture pronounced to be a reward of grace and mercy. The words of the second commandment are observable, “shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.” They that love God and keep His commandments, all the reward they can hope for is, that God should shew mercy unto them. And there is a great deal of congruity, though they seem strange, in the words of David; “Unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for Thou renderest to every man according to his work^a.” That God rendereth to every man, that is, every righteous man, according to his work, is an act of His mercy. Nehemiah^r reckons up many great and noble works that he had done for the honour and service of God; but, that you may see he boasted not in all this, that he had no conceit of any merit in himself, observe how humbly towards the conclusion of the chapter, he supplicates for mercy, and such mercy, as whereby God would spare him, that is, not punish him. “Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of Thy mercy^s.” He counts it greatness of mercy to be spared by God, after all his great good works. In like manner St. Paul, after he had mentioned the frequent acts of charity that Onesiphorus had exercised towards him, prays that God would reward them, in this style; “The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day^t.”

^a Psalm lxii. 12.

^r Chap. xiii.

^s Ver. 22.

^t 2 Tim. i. 16—18.

There are two reasons suggested in the text itself, that utterly destroy all conceit of the merit of our righteousness.

1. By our righteousness we give nothing to God; He reaps no advantage from it to Himself. 'If we sow in righteousness, we sow to ourselves, and the harvest of this righteousness we ourselves reap. "Sow to yourselves, reap ye." "My goodness," saith the Psalmist, "extends not to Thee, but to the saints that are in the earth^u." As if he had said, I may and will do good to Thy saints, but I can do no good to Thee; for I receive all the good I have, or do, from Thee. Indeed, if we are wicked, we hurt not God, but ourselves; and if we are righteous, the benefit is to ourselves, and not to Him. Whatsoever we crawling worms do here on earth, God sits still upon the circle of the heavens, the same perfect, unchangeable, blessed, and happy God, for ever and ever. Only He is pleased out of His infinite condescension, to look down from heaven, upon those little things we do here out of a hearty desire to glorify Him; and in His abundant mercy He will plentifully reward them. We may challenge all who lay such stress upon merit, to answer St. Paul's question, "Who hath first given to Him," that is, God, "and it shall be recompensed to him again^x?"

2. The other reason against all merit of our good works, suggested in the very text, is this: there is no just proportion between our works of righteousness, and the reward of them. Our good works are but a few seeds; but the reward is a harvest. "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy." The words in the Hebrew are emphatical, "reap" *לפי חסד* *lephi chesed*, "according to the measure of mercy." For *lephi* and *kephi*, are in Scripture used to signify the measure or proportion of a thing. Thus, "Every man gathered" *לפי אכלו* *lephi o kelo*, "according to the measure of his eating^y." The sense therefore is: He that sows in righteousness shall reap and receive his reward, not according to the small proportion of the seeds of righteousness that he hath sown, but according to the measure of the Divine mercy and goodness, which useth superabundantly to remunerate man's slender performances. And, accordingly, the learned Drusius thus paraphraseth the

^u Psalm xvi. 2, 3.

^y Exod. xvi. 21.

^x Rom. xi. 35.

words; ~~it, or according to, mercy;~~ *benigna, ac pleniore mensura, quam seminastis*, "in a bountiful and fuller measure than you have sown." As in a good and plentiful year, the harvest or crop that is reaped vastly exceeds the seed sown, every grain yielding many more; so, and much more, it is here. What poor slender seeds of righteousness do we sow! But O the vast crop and harvest of glory, that shall, through the mercy of God, spring and rise out of those seeds! It shall be so great, that when we come to reap it, we ourselves shall stand amazed at it.

To conclude, therefore; he that hath sown the seeds of righteousness most plentifully, must look for his harvest of glory only from the mercy of God. He that is richest in good works, must sue for heaven in the quality of a poor worthless creature, that needs infinite mercy to bring him thither; mercy to pardon his sins antecedent to his good works; mercy to forgive the sins and defects in his works; mercy to advance his works (being, though supposed never so perfect, yet finite and temporary) to the possibility of attaining an infinite and endless reward. He must confess with St. Paul, that "eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ^z." That it is the rich purchase of Christ's most precious blood, by which alone a covenant of eternal life was established upon the gracious condition of "faith working by love;" that it was the grace of the Divine Spirit, promised in the same covenant, that prevented him, and cooperated with him, and continually assisted and followed him, in all his good works; and, consequently, that though his crown of glory be "a crown of righteousness," that is, of God's righteousness, whereby He is obliged to make good His own covenant; yet that it is "a crown of mercy too," because that covenant itself was a covenant of infinite grace and mercy.

And if the best of men, after all the good works they have done, or can do, need mercy, infinite mercy, to save them; what a miserable condition are they in, who have no good works at all to shew; but, on the contrary, a large catalogue of wicked works, unrepented of, to account for? We may say in this sense with St. Peter; "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where

^z Rom. vi. 23.

shall the ungodly and the sinner appear^a?" Certainly, even the mercy of God cannot save this man, because His holiness will not suffer Him. For though our good works are not required to make us capable of meriting heaven, (that being impossible for us;) yet they are absolutely necessary to make us fit objects for infinite mercy to bestow heaven on, or, in the excellent words of St. Paul, "to make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light^b."

To which inheritance, God of His infinite mercy bring us, through Jesus Christ:

To Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be given all honour and glory, adoration and worship, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

^a 1 Pet. iv. 18.

^b Col. i. 12.

SERMON II.^a

THAT THE SOUL OF MAN SUBSISTS AFTER DEATH, IN A PLACE OF
ABODE PROVIDED BY GOD FOR IT, TILL THE RESURRECTION.

ACTS i. 25.

That he might go to his own place.

IN the verses before my text, we have an account of the election of a new Apostle, in the room of the apostate Judas, who, by his defection and miserable death consequent thereon, had rendered the complete and mysterious number of Apostles, chosen by our Saviour, uneven, and made a breach in that jury of witnesses, that were to report and testify His resurrection. In this grand affair, they first make use of their best judgment, by appointing two persons of the number of the seventy disciples^b, Barsabas and Matthias; either of them, as they conceived, fit for the office, leaving it to their Lord and Master to determine which of the two should be the man, and stand as an Apostle. This divine determination they seek for by casting of lots, an ancient way of decision in such cases, used both in the Church of God, and among the Gentiles. But before they go to the decision of this important affair, they betake themselves to their prayers, that God would, by His special providence, direct the lot; and the event was this, that the “lot fell upon Matthias.”

The office of the person to be elected is described, in the verse out of which my text is taken, to be λαβεῖν τὸν κλῆρον

^a [This, and the following Sermon, seem to have been written after the eighth, of which they are in a manner the continuation.]

^b [St. Luke does not expressly say that they were of the number of the seventy disciples, Acts i. 21—23. It is stated by Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. i. 12.]

τῆς διακονίας καὶ ἀποστολῆς, “to be made partaker of the Ministry and Apostleship,” that Ministry and Apostleship from which Judas fell; the sad event of whose fall is said to be this, that “he went to his own place,” or state, a place and state fit for so vile a miscreant; that he fell from the highest dignity to the greatest infelicity, from the fellowship of the Apostles to the society of devils. “That he may take part of this Ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.”

Indeed, some difference hath been started about the words of my text, whether they are to be referred to Judas mentioned immediately before, or to the new Apostle under election. Our learned English paraphrast^c refers them to the latter, understanding that the new Apostle should go and betake himself to his proper place, charge, and province, in the Apostleship, the words, “from which Judas by transgression fell,” being included in a parenthesis. But this interpretation, besides that it departs from the generally received sense of ancient and modern expositors, (which is prejudice enough against it,) is also many ways incommodious. For first it feigns a parenthesis in the text without any reason at all. And then it is not so natural to refer the words to a person mentioned at a distance in the context, as to a person named just before. Lastly, this interpretation seems to suppose, that every Apostle had his distinct and proper place and province in the Apostleship, which is not true. For the Apostleship, and every part of it, was common to every Apostle, who might do all the same things in any place, that any other Apostle did. Sure I am, there was no such distribution of provinces at the time of this election; for then the Apostles executed the same office all in the same place and country, among the Jews, to whom alone they were at first to preach the Gospel of Christ. The dispersion of the Apostles into the several heathen nations, as they themselves saw convenient, was not till after the obstinate infidelity of the Jews gave occasion for it. This sense therefore, though foreign, yet is not so strange as some have made it, who have accused the forementioned excellent expositor of singularity, and as being the first author and inventor of it. For the

^c [Hammond, with whom agree Le Clerc and Ecumenius.]

learned Isidore Clarius, in his notes on my text, delivers the same sense, without expressing any the least dislike of it^d. But yet I say it is a mistake, and the common interpretation is undoubtedly the right, that Judas, having forsaken and betrayed his Lord and Master, brought himself to a most wretched end, (as is before in this chapter related^e;) and upon his death, went to his proper place, the place and state of lost reprobate spirits, and damned souls; a company with which he was far more fit to be numbered, than with the Apostles of Christ. And therefore, the Alexandrian MS. of venerable antiquity, reads here, “to his due place^f,” that is, to the place and state of misery, which he had justly merited and deserved by his wickedness.

Now, that this is the true meaning of my text, I shall farther demonstrate, by shewing that the phrase, “to go to one’s own place^g,” or “to one’s due or appointed place^h,” was a known received phrase in the Apostolic age, to signify a man’s going presently after death into his proper place and state, either of happiness or misery, according to the life which he had before lived. Polycarp, in his epistle to the Philippians, towards the end of it, speaking of the Apostles and other Martyrs of that age, saith, “That they are with the Lord, in their due placeⁱ.”

Clement, Bishop of Rome, of whom St. Paul makes very honourable mention^k, and who was therefore ancients than Polycarp, in his undoubted epistle to the Corinthians, useth the same phrase more than once to the same purpose. For, not far from the beginning of that epistle, speaking of the glorious end of St. Peter, he saith, “Thus having suffered martyrdom, he went to his due place of glory^l.” The same Clement, presently after in the same epistle, speaking of St. Paul’s martyrdom, says, “Thus he departed out of the world,

^d [This is not quite correct: his words are, *Si ad Judam referas, videtur intelligere laqueum quo se dignum judicavit ob proditorem. Sin ad Matthiam, intellige episcopatum cui successit.* Zegerus also referred the words to Judas going and hanging himself. Erasmus and others interpreted them rather of his final punishment, than the intermediate state of his soul.]

^e Ver. 16—18.

^f Εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν δίκαιον.

^g Πορευθῆναι εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἴδιον.

^h Εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον, or ὠρισμένον τόπον.

ⁱ Ὅτι εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον αὐτοῖς τόπον εἰσὶ παρὰ τῷ Κυρίῳ. [c. ult.]

^k Phil. iv. 3.

^l Οὕτω μαρτυρήσας ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον τόπον τῆς δόξης. [c. 5.]

and went to the holy place^m." So Barnabas (or whosoever was the author of that very ancient epistle going under his name) expresseth the happy departure of good men into the other world, by the phrase of "going to their appointed placeⁿ." But the apostolical Bishop of Antioch, Ignatius, in his epistle to the Magnesians, not far from the beginning, speaks fully home to our purpose. "There are two things together set before us, life and death, and every one shall go to his own place^o." Lastly, Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, speaks in the same language with his master. For in his fifth book^p, he says, that the souls of the true disciples of Christ, presently after death, *abibunt in invisibilem locum, definitum eis a Deo, et ibi usque ad resurrectionem commorabuntur*: "shall go into an invisible place, appointed them by God, and there shall tarry even until the resurrection." Where the *definitus locus* "the appointed place," was doubtless in Greek the *ὁρισμένος τόπος*^q of Polycarp, and the same with the *δίκαιος τόπος*, "the due place," used by the Alexandrian MS. here in my text, of the contrary state of Judas: all which expressions, signify the determined proper place or state to which all souls presently after death, good or bad, accordingly go. After so many clear and full testimonies, I suppose no man can yet be to seek what is meant in my text, by Judas's going, after his wretched death, "to his own place^r."

And having thus explained my text, that I may not detain you too long only with a criticism on the words, I shall now proceed to raise some useful and profitable observations from it, which shall be these two.

Observ. 1. The soul of man subsists after death, and when it is dislodged from the body, hath a place of abode provided by God for it, till the resurrection of the body again.

Observ. 2. The soul of every man, presently after death, hath its proper place and state allotted by God, of happiness or misery, according as the man hath been good or bad in his past life.

^m Οὕτως ἀπὸ ἀλλαγῆ τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ εἰς τὸν ἅγιον τόπον ἐπορεύθη. [c. 5.]

ⁿ Ὁδεύειν εἰς τὸν ὁρισμένον τόπον. [c. 19.]

^o Ἐπικείται τὰ δύο ὁμοῦ, ὅ τε θάνατος καὶ ἡ ζωὴ, καὶ ἕκαστος εἰς τὸν ἴδιον τόπον μέλλει χωρεῖν. [c. 5.]

^p Chap. 31.

^q [The original Greek of this passage is published in the edition of 1710, and the words are τὸν τόπον τὸν ὁρισμένον, as Bull supposed.]

^r Εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἴδιον.

Of these propositions, I shall discourse in their order; and the first of them will be as much as I shall be well able to despatch within the compass of time at present allotted me: The soul of man subsists after death, &c. And this proposition I shall manage so, as to prove it chiefly by testimonies of the holy Scripture, supposing that I am to deal with men that acknowledge its Divine authority, (as having been many a time sufficiently proved to them,) and only question, whether any such doctrine be clearly delivered in it. Of which sort are many professed Christians, who believe a resurrection and a life to come, and yet deny the distinct subsistence of the soul after the death of the body; and whilst the body remains in the state of death, that the soul dies and is extinguished with the body; and, consequently, that the resurrection, which we Christians profess to believe in our creed, is of the whole man, both soul and body. Out of the abundance of texts of Scripture that refute this error, I shall make choice of some few, that do it most clearly and expressly.

And first, even in the Old Testament, we have a full testimony given to this truth, that the soul subsists after the death of the body, by Solomon^s, where, describing man's death and dissolution, he saith, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it^t." The plain and evident sense of which words is this: Whereas man consists of two parts, body and soul, the condition of these two, when a man dies, will be very different: for the body being at first taken out of the dust of the earth, and so of a corruptible constitution, shall go back into the earth again, and moulder into dust; but the soul, as it is of another and more excellent original, (as being at first inspired immediately by God Himself into the body,) shall not perish with the body, but return to that God, from whom it came; in whose hands it shall continue safe and inviolate, according to that of the author of the Book of Wisdom; "But the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and there shall no torment touch them^u." For Solomon

^s Eccles. xii. 7.

^t [The whole of this passage, "The plain and evident sense—universal judgment, ver. 13, 14," is repeated

with little variation in Sermon VIII., which appears to have been written first.]

^u Chap. iii. 1.

seems to speak of the end of man according to God's first intention and ordination, which was, that the soul of man, after death, should go to God and the heavenly beings; and not of the accidental event of things, happening through man's sin and wickedness, whereby it comes to pass, that the souls of many men, when they die, instead of going to God, go to the devil and the infernal regions. Though it is true also, that the spirit of every man after death, good or bad, in some sense goes to God, either as a Father or as a Judge, to be kept somewhere under the custody of His almighty power, in order to the receiving of His final sentence at the last judgment, either of happiness or misery. And accordingly, the Wise Man a little after subjoins the article of a future universal judgment^x.

But if any man yet doubt what Solomon intends here by the soul's returning to God, and not to the earth with the body, let him consult the third chapter of this Book of Ecclesiastes. Where he first declares his thoughts of an impartial judgment of God, that shall happen at a certain determinate time, both to the righteous and the wicked, according to their different works and actions; "I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose, and for every work^y." And then in the following verses to the end of the chapter, he expresseth another thought or suggestion, that sometime came into his mind, opposite to the former; or rather, he represents the thought of the profane person, viz. that there is no such future judgment; that religion is a vain thing; that there is no difference between the soul of a man and a brute, but that they both perish together with their bodies; and, consequently, that it is a man's best course, freely to enjoy what this present life affords him, and that it is a vain thing to expect any better estate in another world. In which discourse, he introduceth the Epicurean (if I may be allowed so to call him by an anticipation) thus deriding the notion of the soul's immortality, "Who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth^z?" As if he had said, As for the talk of man's soul being immortal, who can demonstrate that problem?

^x Ver. 13, 14.^y Ver. 17.^z Ver. 21.

Who can discern any sign of difference betwixt the soul of a man and a brute, that shall prove that the one goes upward to the region of permanent and eternal beings, the other downwards, that is, perisheth together with its body that moulders in the earth. Certainly, hence it is most clear, that the phrase of “man’s spirit going upward,” signifies, in Solomon’s sense, something directly opposite to the condition of the soul of a beast, that dies together with its body; that is, that it signifies the immortality of man’s soul, and its subsistence after the death of the body. Now, what Solomon doth here in the beginning of this book question in the person of the Epicurean, whether the spirit of man when he dies doth thus go upward, he doth clearly in the text before cited, towards the end of the same book, (where he expresseth his own most serious and resolved thoughts,) peremptorily determine in these words: “Then shall the dust return to the earth; and the spirit shall return unto God, Who gave it.”

The matter is plain and evident. The New Testament, very often and most expressly, delivers the same doctrine. Our Saviour thus exhorts His disciples: “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell^a.” What can be more clear? If the soul had such a necessary dependence on the body, that when this dies, itself must needs die with it; then he that kills the body would, with the same stroke, murder the soul too. But our Saviour tells us, that this is impossible for man to do; the soul remaining even after the death of the body, and being out of the reach of any created power that is able to destroy it. If it be said, that this is meant only of the utter destruction of the soul, which no man is able to effect, God having promised a resurrection to life again; this will appear to be only a wretched shift, to avoid the force of the plainest text. For in this sense, our Saviour might have as well denied, that it is in the power of a man to kill the body of another man, that is, to destroy it utterly and finally, because God will raise it again at the last day. But our blessed Lord grants, that the body may be killed by man, in the same sense, wherein He denies, that the soul can be destroyed by him;

^a Matt. x. 28.

and therefore speaks not this only with reference to the resurrection.

The same our blessed Saviour assures our belief of this truth by His own example, when, being at the point of death, He said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit^b."

He believed that He had a spirit, a superior soul, that after the death of His body, and the extinction of His animal soul, should still remain; and this He recommends to the gracious and safe custody of His Father. And lest we should think, that this was a peculiar privilege of the soul of the Messiah, St. Stephen, when dying, after the same manner commits his spirit to Christ Himself, then exalted at the right hand of the Father, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit^c."

Again, how express are those words of Christ to the penitent thief on the cross; "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise^d." This certainly is a plain promise to the thief, that on the very same day, wherein he died with Christ, his soul (for his body was to be taken down from the cross, and buried in the earth) should be with Christ in paradise. His soul, therefore, died not with his body, but, immediately after death, went with Christ's soul to paradise, *εἰς τὸν ἴδιον τόπον*, "to the proper place," for so great and illustrious a penitent. The subterfuges and shifts of heretics to evade this text, are so perfectly ridiculous, that I must make myself ridiculous if I should mention them, much more if I should go about seriously to refute them.

Farther, we read expressly in the New Testament of separate spirits of men, both good and bad. Of the spirits of good men departed, the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks, when he tells us, that we Christians are joined not only to an innumerable company of angels, but also to the society of "the spirits of just men made perfect, or that have finished their course^e." Of the spirits and souls of wicked men, remaining after death, St. Peter expressly speaks^f; "By which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the

^b Luke xxiii. 46.

^c Acts vii. 59.

^d Luke xxiii. 43.

^e Heb. xii. 23.

^f [*τετελειωμένων.*]

^g 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20.

days of Noah^h," &c. How, and when Christ preached to those spirits in prison, is not my business at present to inquire: but the text plainly enough affirms, that the spirits of those wicked men that were destroyed by the flood, were then in being, and in prison too; that is, "in the sad place of Judas," in the place and state of miserable souls, reserved, as in a gaol or dungeon, to the future judgment and execution.

St. Paul also most plainly teacheth, that a man (that is, his soul) may be absent from his body, and subsist without it, and in a state of separation from it; "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christⁱ," &c. The same St. Paul speaks of visions and revelations that he had seen and received in paradise and the third heaven: but whether he saw those visions in or out of his body, he professeth himself doubtful and uncertain. "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter^k." If the Apostle had believed the vain philosophy of some men, that a man's soul cannot subsist without his body, he might very easily and most certainly have resolved his own doubt, and concluded that he received those visions and revelations in the body, seeing out of the body he could not so much as subsist.

But not to pursue any farther those particular texts of Scripture, that occasionally (and as it were by the by) dropped from the pens of the sacred writers, let us inquire into the whole state of the question concerning the soul's immortality and permanence after death, as it was controverted between the two great sects

^h [For the opinion of the Ante-Nicene Fathers concerning this passage, see Hermas, iii. sim. 9. c. 16. Irenæus, iv. 27. Clem. Alex. Strom. iii. 4. p. 526. et vi. 6. Excerpta Theod. ad fin. Clem. Alex. p. 973. Tertull. de Anima, c. 7, 55.

Origen. c. Cels. ii. 43. In Exod. §. 6. In Reg. Hom. 2. vol. ii. p. 497. In Psalm. p. 553. Hippol. de Antichristo, §. 26, 45.]

ⁱ 2 Cor. v. 8—10.

^k 2 Cor. xii. 2—4.

among the Jews, the Sadducees and Pharisees, in our Saviour's time, and as it was by the Apostles of Christ and by Christ Himself professedly determined.

The dogmata and tenets of the Sadducees, opposite to the doctrine of the ancient Church of the Jews, held by the Pharisees, are very briefly, yet fully enough, expressed by St. Luke¹. "For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both." The Sadducees believed that there is a God, though whether they believed God Himself to be incorporeal, is not without very great reasons questioned by some. But this is certain, that besides God, they believed nothing at all to subsist, but what is perceptible to sense. And hence they denied angels to be permanent substances, believing the angels, of which they had read in Scripture, to be only certain phantasms, occasionally formed by God, when He would at any time reveal His will to the sons of men, and afterwards vanishing and disappearing. And agreeably to the same hypothesis, they denied also any such beings as the spirits of men, distinct substances from their bodies, and able to subsist without them. And hence farther, by a necessary chain of consequences, they denied the resurrection of the bodies of men after death. For to what purpose should the body of man arise, if there were no soul in being, to which it should be reunited, and by which it should be again informed? And how could the same man at the resurrection receive the reward of his past actions, as the Pharisees rightly taught, if his soul did not subsist after death? For every man hath his individuation chiefly from his soul; and *animus cujusque est quisque*, "the soul of every man is the man." If therefore the soul of man itself be extinguished by death, at the raising of our dust a new soul must be produced by God for every man, and so every man would be another man, and the same men could not receive the rewards and punishments of the world to come, due to their respective actions done in this life, which is the only supposed end of the resurrection. This a learned man more scholastically expresseth in these words: "If the soul be not a permanent substance, but only a quality or crisis, which, when the body dies, perisheth, and is extinguished with

¹ Acts xxiii. 8.

it, it is impossible that the same numerical man should rise after death; because the form or soul which perished, cannot be numerically the same with the form or soul which is restored. For this is numerically another, because between that which perished, and this which is restored, there intervened *nihilum*, ‘a nonentity.’ Now, whensoever between two extremes, a medium of a diverse kind is interposed, those two cannot be numerically the same, though they may be the same specifically. For that is numerically one, which is contained in one common term; as that is one line, which is not cut off or interrupted, and that one motion, which is not discontinued by rest. But there is no common term between that which once was and perished, and that which afterwards is produced; for non-existence came between them, and therefore they cannot be numerically the same.” Vain, therefore, would be the expectation of good men, because they themselves should not be rewarded in the resurrection, but others for them.

To this I add, that as a resurrection cannot rightly be defended, unless we assert the permanence and subsistence of man’s soul after death; so this being acknowledged, a necessity of the resurrection of his body plainly follows. In order to the demonstration whereof, we are in the first place to observe, that the body is not in man a thing adventitious or superinduced, a thing which at first he was without, and afterward was invested with; (a dream of those men, who hold a preexistence of souls or spiritual beings, afterward, for some fault committed in their primitive state, thrust down into bodies, as into prisons;) but it is an essential part of man. Though the soul be the principal, and by far the most excellent part, (as I have said before,) yet the body too is one constitutive part of that *compositum*, that compounded thing, which we call man. For the sacred oracles teach us, that the body of man was a thing made by God in the very first creation and constitution of man; nay, that the body was made before the soul, “God first forming man out of the dust of the earth, and then breathing into his nostrils the breath of life, so that man became a living soul^m.” That is, that which was taken out of the earth, and that which was from without breathed by God into it, made in the whole one living man;

^m Gen. ii. 7.

the soul being here put for the whole man, as often elsewhere in the Holy Scriptures. And the Apostle plainly tells us, that the body, as well as the soul and spirit, belongs to the *ὅλοκληρον*, “the whole” of man, that whole, which he prays may be preserved “blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus,” that is, to the day of judgmentⁿ. This being established, we thus argue. Seeing the soul of man is permanent, and subsists after the death of the body, and yet the body also belongs essentially to the constitution of man; when that body is defunct, either the soul must remain perpetually in a state of separation, and as it were of widowhood, or the body must be recalled to life, and again united to it.

The former hypothesis agrees not to reason. For seeing the soul alone doth not constitute human nature, that being which we call man, if the body utterly perished, would for ever remain as it were an half man, and be destitute of a part of himself. And indeed, that he should be so by dispensation, and for a certain time, and for certain causes, is not absurd; but that he should continue so for ever, seems repugnant to the order of things established by the Divine wisdom. In a word, if man had not sinned, the union between his soul and body should have been uninterrupted and perpetual, that is, if he had never sinned, he should never have died; but by sin came death, which dissolved the union. Yet by the grace of a new covenant in Christ, that death becomes not perpetual, and man receives a second promise of immortality. In order to which, though his body remain for a while under death, (an irreversible decree being passed, that man should return to the dust from whence he was taken,) yet his soul still subsists, and his body too shall in due time be raised again; and then the breach made by sin shall be fully healed, and the union between soul and body shall never more be dissolved, but the duration of both shall run on in lines parallel. And our Saviour expressly tells us, that “they who shall be accounted worthy of a blessed resurrection, shall not, cannot die any more^o.”

So necessarily doth a resurrection to judgment, and the soul’s subsistence and permanence after death, depend each on the other; and therefore the Sadducees were very consistent in

ⁿ 1 Thess. v. 23.

^o Luke xx. 35, 36.

their principles, when they denied both together. And so much for the philosophy of the Sadducees in this matter.

The Pharisees on the other side held a just contrary chain of doctrines; viz. that there are certain immaterial and invisible beings, both angels, and also spirits of men distinct substances from their bodies, and subsisting after the death of their bodies, and therefore that there shall be a resurrection. He that believed one of these hypotheses, believed all; and he that denied either of them, equally denied the rest. Now St. Luke expressly tells us, that St. Paul openly declared himself to be on the Pharisees' side in this controversy^p. He made indeed this profession at that time politicly, and to save himself from present danger; but yet his profession was honest and true, and void of any deceit or equivocation. And why should St. Luke, together with the error of the Sadducees, in denying a resurrection, join their other opinions; that there are no such things as angels, or spirits of men distinct substances from their bodies, but that he believed these opinions to be equally errors with the former, and indeed to have a necessary connection with it?

But let us hear the determination of our Lord Himself in this controversy; "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living^q." Where our Saviour proves against the Sadducees, the resurrection of the dead, from the words of God concerning Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, spoken to Moses many ages after the death of those blessed Patriarchs, "I am the God of Abraham," &c. And he lays down this hypothesis as the foundation of his argument, that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Which indeed is an evident proposition, seeing for God to be one's God, necessarily implies a present relation that God hath to him; and no relation can continue, where either of the relatives cease, and is taken away. Whence it clearly follows, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were alive, and did subsist (viz. in their spirits) when God spake those words to Moses, that is, many ages after the death of their bodies.

And to this sense of our Saviour's words, doubtless the holy

^p Acts xxiii. 6.

^q Matt. xxii. 31, 32.

Apostolic Bishop and Martyr, Polycarp, had respect in his last prayer at the stake, recited by Eusebius^r, out of the Epistle of the brethren of Smyrna, who were present at his martyrdom. For in the beginning of that prayer, he thus addresseth himself to God: "O thou God of the whole race of righteous men, who live before Thee^s." And having particularly mentioned the Martyrs, he presently adds, "Among whom may I be received before Thee this day^t." So Justin Martyr, in his second Apology^u, (as it is reckoned in the vulgar editions,) tells us, that by what was said out of the bush to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham," &c. was signified, "That those men, even after death, do still remain and subsist^x." Hence also, in the most ancient Liturgies of the Church, the place and receptacle of the spirits of just men deceased, is called "the region of the living, the bosom of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob^y," as we find it in the Office for the Dead, at large described by the author of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy^z. And from those ancient Liturgies, our Church hath taken that prayer of hers, which we have in the Office for the Burial of the Dead: "Almighty God, with Whom do live the spirits of just men, that depart hence in the Lord."

Now our blessed Saviour having clearly proved, that the spirits of men can and do subsist after death, had thereby sufficiently confuted the whole doctrine of the Sadducees, without proceeding any farther, considering the connection of their dogmata, or opinions, before mentioned. They denied the subsistence of the spirits of men after death, and therefore denied the resurrection of their bodies: and if they could have been convinced of the former, they would readily have acknowledged the other also. In a word, they denied in the whole any life after this, any state or subsistence of men after death, and believed death to be *ultima linea rerum*, "the last line and bound of things," beyond which the concerns of men are no farther extended. I doubt not, but this is a true account of

^r Eccles. Hist. b. iv. c. 15.

^s 'Ο Θεός παντός τοῦ γένους τῶν δικαίων, οἱ ζῶσιν ἐν ἡρώδι σου.

^t 'Εν οἷς προσδεχθεῖν ἐν ἡρώδι σου σήμερον.

^u [p. 96.]

^x 'Αποθανόντας ἐκείνους μένειν. [Apol. i. 63. p. 82.]

^y Ἡ χώρα τῶν ζώντων.

^z Chap. ult. [This is one of the works falsely ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite.]

our Saviour's reasoning in that famous text, which some learned interpreters have strangely perplexed, for want of attending to the whole connection of the Sadducees' doctrine above observed. Certainly, if our Saviour's reasoning had been so subtle, intricate, and elaborate, as some expositors have made it, it had been impossible for the common people to have understood the force of it. But that the multitude themselves presently apprehended it, and wondered at our Saviour's convincing way of arguing, is expressly affirmed. "And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at His doctrine^a." The multitude were on the Pharisees' side against the Sadducees, as Josephus and others assure us. This multitude presently conceived the text alleged and urged by our Saviour, to be a clear proof, that the holy Patriarchs subsisted and lived after the death of their bodies. And they knew this to be an effectual refutation of the whole doctrine of the Sadducees, who held that there is no life after this present life, but that men die as the beasts that perish.

Thus the doctrine of the immortality of man's soul, and its subsistence after the death of the body, appears to be the plain doctrine of Christ and His Apostles, delivered in the New Testament. But lest we should yet suspect ourselves to be deceived in the sense of those evident texts of Scripture, (as some would fain persuade us that we dream when we are awake, and that the sun shines not at the brightest noon,) I add, that the Catholic Church of Christ after the Apostles, ever acknowledged the same doctrine, and reckoned it among the undoubted articles of the Christian religion. You have already heard the judgment of those Doctors and Martyrs of the Church, who lived in or very near the Apostles' times; how they believed, that the soul of every man, presently after death, hath a place to go to, and dies not with the body. And the same tradition was constantly held and maintained in the Church all along afterwards; inasmuch, that the doctrine is to be found in the most ancient Liturgies, as hath been above observed; wherein it was unfit, that any disputable problem should have a place. Nor would the Church ever tolerate or suffer any man, under her government, to teach the contrary opinion.

^a Matt. xxii. 33.

To pass by the dreams of those infamous heretics, the Valentinians; the first (to my best remembrance) that universally affirmed the dissolution of all men's souls together with their bodies, were certain heterodox persons of Arabia, about the middle of the third century, mentioned by Eusebius in his sixth book of Ecclesiastical History^b, where he tells us that they held, "That the souls of men in this present world die and perish together with their bodies; but that at the resurrection they return again to life, together with the same bodies^c." Against these novelists, a great Council was presently called, wherein the famous Origen was present; and he by his arguments so effectually dealt with them, that they renounced their error, and so prevented the anathema of the Council, that would otherwise certainly have been denounced against them.

I add, over and above, that the subsistence of the soul of man after the death of his body, was a tradition generally, nay, I think universally, received among the civilized heathen nations. For though certain wrangling and contentious philosophers among them disputed the matter, and by disputing came at last most of them to doubt of it, and some of them flatly to deny it; yet this could not hinder, but that the notion still prevailed among the generality of men in every age and nation. Nay, in that part of the world, which for so many ages remained undiscovered and unknown to the rest of the earth, (there being no very ancient historian or writer extant, that gives us any certain account of it,) I say, in that part of the world which is called America, when it was first discovered by the Christians, this faith of the soul's immortality was found to obtain. Joseph Acosta, a learned Spaniard, and an approved author, who had lived in those parts, tells us^d, that the Indians of Peru believed commonly, "that the souls of men lived after this present life," [and that the good were in glory, and the bad in pain]. Nay, in that region of America which is called Nova Francia, New France, although when it was first discovered, the people were found rude and barbarous; insomuch, that a good author saith

^b Chap. 37.^c Τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν ψυχὴν τέως μὲν κατὰ τὸν ἐνεστώτα καιρὸν, ἅμα τῇ τελευτῇ συναποθνήσκειν τοῖς σώματι καὶ συν-

διαφθείρεσθαι αὐτοῖς δὲ ποτε κατὰ τὸν τῆς ἀναστάσεως καιρὸν σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀναβιώσεσθαι.

^d l. v. c. 7.

of them, “That they are not bound by any laws, nor observe any good customs, but live as beasts devoid of reason;” yet even of these the same author thus testifieth, “They believe the immortality of men’s souls, and say, that when they leave their bodies, they go to another region, where their deceased friends are^e.” Moreover, Leri^f tells us of a strange sort of people in America, of a hard name, (they are called by him, “To you pinam baultii,) who acknowledge no particular god at all, but only in general, certain spirits with whom their priests converse, from whom they believe themselves to receive courage and success in war, and the production of the fruits of the earth: and therefore, they are instanced in by some as a nation atheistical, though unjustly; for those spirits which they acknowledge are their gods. However, these very men (as the same Leri^f informs us) confess, that “The souls of the virtuous” (that is, of those who have valiantly defended their country, for this seems to be the chiefest, if not the only virtue which they admired,) “do presently after death, fly beyond certain very high mountains, and at last light on most pleasant gardens, where they lead a merry life in perpetual delights and dances: and that, on the other side, the souls of cowards, and degenerate souls, go *ad aygnan*, that is, to the devil, and live in torments with him.” In a word, I am yet to seek for that nation in the world, among whom the primitive religion, taught by God to the first men, is so utterly corrupted and lost, but that they have still some notion remaining among them of the soul’s immortality and permanence after death.

To conclude, therefore, let us firmly adhere to this confessed truth, this great truth, this fundamental truth, not only of our Christian religion, but of religion in general. Let us take heed of those men, who, professing to believe the resurrection promised in the Gospel, do yet deny the subsistence of man’s soul in the interval between death and that resurrection. That faith and this denial cannot well stand together; the resurrection of the body necessarily supposing the immortality and permanence of the soul, as I have evidently shewn you. They

^e Animarum credunt immortalitatem, dicuntque quod postquam ex corpore migrarunt, tunc in aliam migrant regionem,

ubi amici illorum defuncti reperiuntur.
^f [Historia Navigationis in Brasiliam a Joanne Lerio Burgundo. 1686.]

therefore that deny the latter, lay a sure foundation for the denial of the former too; which is the great article of our religion, the subversion whereof renders our whole faith vain, as the Apostle tells us^g.

But much more are we to beware of those, who deny this truth with a direct design to destroy all our hopes or fears of any life to come. Let not the sophistry of these men, who study to shake off their Christianity and the religion of mankind at once, in the least unsettle our persuasion and belief of this established verity. It is here, if any where, certain, that *Vox populi* (or rather *populorum*) *est vox Dei*, The voice of all people and nations, howsoever distant in place, however otherwise differing in religion from each other, yet all here singing the same song, must needs be the voice of God; or at least an echo of that voice, by which God spake to holy men in the infancy of the world, and revealed to them the doctrine of a future life; a voice once so strongly and convincingly uttered, that it went through all the earth, and to the end of the world; and there is no speech nor language, no people or nation, where the same voice is not still heard: to allude to the words of the Psalmist^h, This were sufficient to arm us against the cavils of those few self-opiniated men, that in every age (especially in this of ours) have made it their business to molest and disturb the common faith of the world. But when we have the consent of nations confirmed by a new divine revelation, a revelation proved to be such by the most undeniable arguments, what madness were it to doubt? Let us not, therefore, give any ear to the voice of the Epicurean, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die:" that is, Let us live like beasts, because we are to die as suchⁱ; but rather let us resolve to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;" because, though as to our bodies, we may die to-morrow, and must die shortly, yet our souls are certainly to live and subsist after death, in order to a future doom of happiness or misery. Let us hearken to the wisest of men, Solomon; who having asserted the soul's immortality^k, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall

^g 1 Cor. xv. 16, 17.^h Psalm xix. 3, 4.ⁱ 1 Cor. xv. 31.^k Eccles. xii. 7.

return unto God who gave it ; ” presently after¹ concludes, and his conclusion shall be mine, in these words :

“ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter : Fear God, and keep His commandments ; for this is the whole of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”

In the day of which dreadful judgment, God shew mercy to us all, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

To Whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be given all honour and glory, adoration and worship, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

¹ Ver. 13, 14.

SERMON III.

CONCERNING THE MIDDLE STATE OF HAPPINESS OR MISERY,
ALLOTTED BY GOD TO EVERY MAN PRESENTLY AFTER DEATH,
ACCORDING AS HE HAS BEEN GOOD OR BAD IN HIS PAST LIFE,
INCONSISTENT WITH THE POPISH DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY.

ACTS i. 25.

That he might go to his own place.

IN my former discourse on this text, having gathered two propositions from it, I fully despatched the first of them, concerning the subsistence and permanence of man's soul after the death of his body. I am now to proceed (with God's assistance) to the other proposition or observation, which was this:

Observ. 2. The soul of every man presently after death, hath its proper place and state allotted by God, either of happiness or misery, according as the man hath been good or bad in his past life.

For the text tells us, that the soul of Judas, immediately after his death, had not only a place to be in, but also τὸν τόπον τὸν ἴδιον, "his own proper place," a place fit for so horrid a betrayer of his most gracious Lord and Master. And I have shewn you, that the Apostolic writers were wont to express the different place and state of good and bad men presently after death, by this and the like phrases, that they went to their "own proper, due," or "appointed places:" that is, to places agreeable to their respective qualities, the good to a place of happiness, the wicked to a place and state of misery. If there were one common receptacle for all departed souls, good and bad, (as some have imagined,) Judas could not be said presently after death to "go to his own proper place," nor Peter to his; but the

same place would contain them both: but Judas hath his proper place, and Peter his. And here what avails the difference of place, unless we allow also a difference of state and condition? If the joys of paradise were in hell, hell would be paradise; and if the torments of hell were in paradise, paradise would be hell: Judas, therefore, is in misery, and Peter in happiness. And what happiness or misery can be there, where there is no sense of either? If presently after death, one common gulf of insensibility and oblivion swallowed up the souls of good and bad alike, the state of Judas and Peter would be the same. The result of all which, is manifestly this, that the souls of men do not only subsist and remain after the death of their bodies, but also live and are sensible of pain or pleasure in that separate state; the wicked being tormented at present with a piercing remorse of conscience, (that sleepy lion being now fully awakened,) and expecting a far more dreadful vengeance yet to fall on them; and, on the other side, the good being refreshed with the peace of a good conscience, (now immutably settled,) and with unspeakable comforts of God, and yet joyfully waiting for a greater happiness at the resurrection. And to prove this more fully will be my business at this time. Indeed I have been constrained occasionally to intermix somewhat of this argument in my former discourse on this text; but it is a subject worthy of a distinct and more copious handling.

There are some who grant, that the soul of man is a distinct substance from his body, and doth subsist after the death thereof; but yet they dream, that the soul in the state of separation, is as it were in a sleep, a lethargy, a state of insensibility, having no perception at all, either of joy or sorrow, happiness or misery. An odd opinion, which seems altogether inconsistent with itself. For how can the soul subsist and remain a soul, without sense and perception? For, as Tertullian somewhere truly saith, *Vita animæ est sensus*, "The life of the soul is perception." Wherefore, to say an insensible soul, seems a contradiction in terms. It is true, whilst our souls are confined to these bodies, they can have no distinct perception of things without the help of fancy and those corporeal ideas, and, as it were, images of things impressed on it, which, being seated in the body, must necessarily

die and perish with it. But yet even now we find, that the soul being first helped by imagination, may at length arrive to a perception of some most certain conclusions, which are beyond the reach of imagination. We may understand more than we can imagine; that is, we may by reason certainly collect, that there are some things really existing, whereof we can frame no idea or phantasm in our imaginations. Thus, I am most certain, that there is a Being eternal, that hath no beginning of existenee; though I can never be able to imagine a thing, without attributing some beginning of existenee to it. A phantasm of eternity I can never have; but that there is something eternal, I say, I can thus by reasoning demonstrate. Either there is something eternal, that had no beginning, or else it will necessarily follow, that there was a time or space (let it be never so many millions of ages ago, it matters not) when nothing existed. If every being whatsoever had a beginning, before which it was not, then there was a space or time (I may have leave to call it so for want of a fitter word) when no being at all was. He is a man of a desperately lost understanding, that doth not clearly perceive the evidence of this consequence. Now if ever there was a time when nothing at all was, then nothing ever could have been; for by nothing, nothing could be produced. But we are sure that we ourselves exist, and many other beings; therefore, there is an eternal Being, that had no beginning of existence, and by which all other beings that are not eternal, do exist. After the same manner, we can demonstrate divers other propositions, which are beyond the comprehension of our imagination. We have therefore a faculty or power within us superior to imagination; and of this we affirm, that it shall still remain, act, and operate, even when this grosser imagination of ours ceaseth, and is extinguished.

If it be inquired, in what way the soul perceives, when out of the body, whether by the help of some new subtiler organs and instruments fitted to its present state, which either by its own native power given in its creation it forms to itself, or by a special act of the Divine power it is supplied with, or whether without them; I must answer with St. Paul in a like case^a, “I cannot tell; God knoweth^b.” And if any man shall laugh at

^a 1 Cor. xii. 2.

^b Οὐκ οἶδα ὁ Θεὸς, οἶδεν.

this ingenuous confession of our ignorance, his laughter will but betray his own ignorance and folly. For even now we can scarce explain how we see or hear, how we think or understand, how we remember least of all; though we have continual experience of all these operations in ourselves. And must it be thought strange, that we cannot tell how our souls shall understand and operate, when out of our bodics, that being a state of which we never yet had any experience? Indeed, whilst our souls are wrapped in this flesh, we can no more imagine how they shall act when divested of it, than a child in the womb (even though we should suppose it to have the actual understanding of an adult person) can conceive, what kind of life or world that is, into which it is afterward to be born. Or (to use another similitude) we can now no more conceive the manner of the soul's operation, when absent from the body, than a man born blind, that never saw the light, can understand a discourse of colours, or comprehend all the wonders and mysteries of the optic science. But the thing itself, that the soul in the state of separation hath a perception of things, and by that perception is either happy or miserable, is ascertained to us by divine Revelation, of which we have all reasonable evidence, that it is indeed divine, and without the guidance of which, all our best philosophy in this matter is precarious and uncertain.

It was an assertion of the great Verulam^b, that all inquiries about the nature of the reasonable soul "must be bound over at last unto religion, there to be determined and defined; for otherwise, they still lie open to many errors and illusions of sense. For seeing that the substance of the soul was not deduced and extracted in her creation from the mass of heaven and earth, but immediately inspired from God; and seeing the laws of heaven and earth are the proper subjects of philosophy; how can the knowledge of the substance of the reasonable soul be derived or fetched from philosophy? But it must be drawn from the same inspiration from whence the substance thereof first flowed." Let us therefore hear what the divinely-inspired writers, especially of the New Testament, and the Doctors of the primitive Church, by tradition from them, have taught us in this matter. And here most of those texts, which we have alleged

^c Advanc. of Learn. l. iv. c. 3.

for the proof of the former proposition, will also serve for the confirmation of this second. We have heard our Saviour Himself; but lest we should be thought to have misunderstood Him, let us next hear His Apostles in this question.

St. Paul, who had been caught up into the third heaven, and also into paradise, which the Scriptures tell us is the receptacle of the spirits of good men, separated from their bodies, and therefore was best able to give us an account of the state of souls dwelling there: he assures us, that those souls live and operate, and have a perception of excellent things. Nay, in the very same text where he speaks of that rapture of his^d, he plainly enough confirms this hypothesis. For first, when he there declares himself uncertain, whether he received those admirable visions he speaks of, in or out of the body, he manifestly supposeth it possible for the soul, when out of the body, not only to subsist, but also to perceive and know, and even things beyond the natural apprehension of mortal men. And then when he tells us, that he received in paradise visions and revelations, and heard there ἄρρητα ῥήματα, “unspeakable words, not lawful (or rather not possible) for man to utter^e,” he directly teacheth, that paradise is so far from being a place of darkness and obscurity, silence and oblivion, where the good spirits, its proper inhabitants, are all in a profound sleep, like bats in their dark winter quarters; (as some have vainly imagined;) that, on the contrary, it is a most glorious place, full of light and ravishing vision, a place where mysteries may be heard and learnt far surpassing the reach of frail mortals. Lastly, the glories of the third heaven, and of paradise too, seem to be by an extraordinary revelation opened and discovered to St. Paul. not only for his own support under the heavy pressure of his afflictions, but also that he might be able to speak of them with greater assurance to others. And the order is observable: First, he had represented to him the most perfect joys of the third, or highest heaven, of which we hope to be partakers after the resurrection; and then, lest so long an expectation should discourage us, he saw also the intermediate joys of paradise, wherewith the souls of the faithful are refreshed

^d viz. 2 Cor. xii. 2—4.

de Princip. ii. 7. §. 4. *non licet pro non*

^e [So says Origen, (or rather Rufinus,) *potest.*]

until the resurrection; and for our comfort he tells us, that even these also are inexpressible.

The same blessed Apostle, when in the flesh, tells us, that he desired “to depart, and to be with Jesus Christ, which is far better^f.” Where, if any man shall doubt what is meant by ἀναλῦσαι, which we translate “to depart,” the phrase is clearly explained by the following opposition. “^gNevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you^h.” Whence it is plain, that ἀναλῦσαι, “to depart,” is to depart from the flesh, that is, this mortal body, that is, to die. Now how could the Apostle think it better for him (yea “by far the betterⁱ”) to depart from the body, than to remain in it, if, when he should depart from the body, he should be deprived of all sense, and sink into a lethargy, and utter oblivion of things? Is it not better to have the use of our reasoning faculty, than to be deprived of it? Is it not better to praise God in the land of the living, than to be in a state, wherein we can have no knowledge of God at all, nor be in any capacity of praising Him? Besides, the Apostle doth not desire to depart from the flesh, or to die, merely that he might be at rest, and freed from the labours and persecutions attending his Apostolic office; which is the frigid and dull gloss of some interpreters on the text; but chiefly in order to this end, that he might “be with Christ.” Now certainly, we are more with Christ whilst we abide in the flesh, than when we depart from it, if, when we are departed, we have no sense at all of Christ, or of any thing else.

Let us hear the same Apostle again^k. “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home (or rather conversant) in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight:) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present (or conversant) with the Lord.” Where two things are, in the first place, to be observed: 1. That the Apostle doth here undeniably speak of that state of the faithful, which presently commenceth after death, and not of that only which follows the resurrection. For he expressly speaks of them as in the state of separation, when

^f Phil. i. 23.

^g Ver. 24.

^h Τὸ ἐπιμένειν ἐν τῇ σαρκί.

ⁱ Πολλῶ μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον.

^k 2 Cor. v. 6—8.

they are “absent from the body¹.” 2. That the Apostle, speaking to the faithful of Corinth in general, joins them together with himself, speaking all along in the plural number, “we are confident,” &c. ; and thereby signifies, that he speaks not of a privilege peculiar to himself, and some few other eminent saints like himself; but of the common state and condition of the faithful presently after death. Which two things being premised, the text alleged plainly teacheth us this proposition: That the faithful when they are absent from their bodies, that is, departed this life, are present with the Lord, and that in a sense wherein, whilst they were present in their bodies, they were absent from the Lord. And what sense, I pray, can that be, unless this, that when present in their bodies, they did not so nearly enjoy Christ, as now, when absent from their bodies, they do? No sophistry can possibly reconcile this text with their opinion who affirm, that the souls of the faithful, during the interval between death and the resurrection, are in a profound sleep, and void of all sense and perception.

But let us at length hear the Lord Jesus Himself, Who came down from heaven, and therefore knew most certainly the whole economy of the heavenly regions: and Who, upon the account of His omniscient and omnipresent Deity, as perfectly knew the miserable state of those spirits, who dwell in the opposite regions of darkness. He, when He was dying, made this promise to the repenting thief that was crucified with Him; “To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise^m:” where (as learned interpreters have observed) Christ promiseth more than He had been asked. The penitent thief’s request was, “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” To which our Saviour answers, Thou askest Me to remember thee hereafter, when I come into My kingdom; but I will not put off thy request so long, “but on this very day” I will give thee a part and the first fruits of that hoped-for felicity; die securely, presently after death divine comforts wait for thee.

“To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.” Paradise? What place is that? Surely every man that hath heard of it, conceives it to be a place of pleasure. And hence it is proverbial among us, to express a very pleasant and delightful

¹ Ἐκδημούντες ἐκ τοῦ σώματος.

^m Luke xxiii. 43.

place by calling it a paradise. Into this place, our Saviour promiseth the thief an admission "on the very day" that he died and was crucified with Him. Now to what purpose was it told him, that he should on "that day" be an inhabitant of paradise, unless then he should be capable of the joys and felicities of that delightful place? Paradise would be no paradise to him, that should have no sense or faculty to taste and perceive the delights and pleasures of it. But that we may not discourse uncertainly, let us consider, that the person to whom our Saviour spake these words was a Jew, and that our blessed Lord, speaking in kindness to him, intended to be understood by him. We are therefore to inquire, what the notion of the ancient Jews was concerning paradise, and the persons inhabiting there.

Paradise among the Jews primarily signified גן עדן *Gan Eden*, "the garden of Eden," that blessed garden, wherein Adam in his state of innocence dwelt. By which, because it was a most pleasant and delightful place, they were wont symbolically to represent the place and state of good souls separated from their bodies, and waiting for the resurrection; whom they believed to be in a state of happiness, far exceeding all the felicities of this life, but yet inferior to that consummate bliss which follows the resurrection. For they distinguished paradise from the third heaven, as St. Paul also, being bred up in the Jewish literature, seems to do in the above-cited text", where he speaks of several visions and revelations that he had received, one in the third heaven, another in paradise. Hence it was the solemn good wish of the Jews (as the learned^o tell us from the Talmudists) concerning their dead friend, "Let his soul be in the garden of Eden," or, "Let his soul be gathered into the garden of Eden." And in their prayers for a dying person, they used to say, "Let him have his portion in paradise, and also in the world to come." In which form, "paradise" and "the world to come" are plainly distinguished. According to which notion, the meaning of our Saviour in this promise to the penitent thief, is evidently this: that he should presently after his death enter with Him into that place of bliss and happiness, where the souls of the righteous, separated from their bodies,

^a 2 Cor. xii.

^o Vid. Grot. in locum.

inhabit, and where they wait in a joyful expectation of the resurrection, and the consummation of their bliss in the highest heaven. For that our Saviour here did not promise the thief an immediate entrance into that heaven, the ancients gathered from hence, that He Himself, as man, did not ascend thither till after His resurrection, as our very creed informs us; which is also St. Austin's argument in his fifty-seventh Epistle.

The texts of Scripture hitherto alleged, speak indeed only of the souls of good men: but by the rule of contraries we may gather, that the souls of the wicked also in the state of separation are sensible, sensible of great anguish and torment at present, and being in a dreadful expectation of a far greater torment yet to come. Let us hear our Saviour again plainly describing both states of separated souls in the parable of the rich man, and Lazarus the beggar^p; "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell (in *hades*) he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." Here Lazarus is expressly said, presently after his death to be in Abraham's bosom, and comforted there; and the rich man immediately after his death to be tormented in *hades*.

It is true this is a parable, and accordingly several things in it are parabolically expressed: but though every thing in a parable be not argumentative, yet the scope of it is, as all Divines acknowledge. Now it plainly belongs to the very scope and design of this parable, to shew what becomes of the souls of good and bad men after death. And we have already heard from our Saviour's own mouth, that one part of the parable concerning the comfortable state of good souls in Abraham's bosom, or paradise, immediately after death, is true and real; and, therefore, so is the other concerning the souls of the wicked.

^p Luke xvi. 22—25.

Add hereunto, that our Saviour spake this parable also to the Jews; and that, therefore, the parable must be expounded agreeably to the ancient cabala, or tradition, received among them concerning the state of separate souls. Now whereas our Saviour saith of the soul of Lazarus, that immediately after his death it was conveyed by angels into Abraham's bosom; we find it was also the belief of the Jewish Church, before our Saviour's time, that the souls of the faithful, when they die, are by the ministry of angels conducted to paradise, where they are immediately placed in a blissful and happy state. For the Chaldee paraphrast on Cant. iv. 12, speaking of the garden of Eden, (that is, paradise,) saith, that thereinto "no man hath power of entering but the just, whose souls are carried thither by the hands of angels." If this had been an erroneous opinion of the Jews, doubtless our Saviour would never have given any the least countenance to it, much less would he have plainly confirmed it, by teaching the same thing in this parable.

These testimonies of Holy Writ (to omit divers others) clearly enough prove what we have alleged them for. But for our farther confirmation, and to leave no ground of suspicion, that we have misunderstood or misapplied them, let us, in the next place, hear what the approved Doctors of the Church, that were the disciples and scholars of the divinely-inspired Apostles, and the nearer successors of these, have delivered concerning this matter. Now I do affirm the consentient and constant doctrine of the primitive Church to be this: That the souls of all the faithful, immediately after death, enter into a place and state of bliss, far exceeding all the felicities of this world, though short of that most consummate perfect beatitude of the kingdom of heaven, with which they are to be crowned and rewarded in the resurrection; and so, on the contrary, that the souls of all the wicked are presently after death in a state of very great misery, and yet dreading a far greater misery at the day of judgment. And here, in the first place, would it not be highly worth the while to understand the faith in this question of a cotemporary, familiar, and fellow-labourer with the Apostles, and a most approved one too, canonized and sainted even while on earth, by the great Apostle St. Paul^a, and himself called by

^a Phil. iv. 3.

the ancients^r an Apostle, and that delivered in a writing or epistle, used to be read in the public assemblies of the primitive Church, together with the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament? Doubtless one clear and full testimony of such an author, out of such a writing, is more precious than gold, worth a thousand sentences of our later most celebrated Doctors. St. Clement, therefore, in his undoubted Epistle to the Corinthians^s, thus writes of the place and state of all faithful souls presently after death.

“All the generations, from Adam to this day, are past and gone: but they that have finished their course in charity, according to the grace of Christ, ‘possess the region of the godly’,^t who shall be manifested in the visitation of the kingdom of Christ. For it is written, ‘Enter into thy chambers, for a very little while, till My wrath and fury be passed over: and I will remember the good day, and will raise you again out of your graves.’”

Where he assigns but one place to the souls of all good men deceased, since the beginning of the world, and he calls it “the region of the godly,” and understands it to be a safe and comfortable refuge, shelter, or hiding-place for them, till the visitation of the kingdom of Christ; that is, till the resurrection and final judgment.

But where are we to seek that text of Scripture, which St. Clement applies to this purpose? I answer, we may find, though not exactly the words, yet the sense of it, Isa. xxvi. 19. “Thy dead men shall live, together with My dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.” And, ver. 20. “Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.” Where that the words of the 19th verse, were by the Jews, before our Saviour’s time, mystically understood of the real and proper resurrection of the dead at the last day, is certain, from the Chaldee paraphrast on the place. And it is as certain, that the chambers of God’s people, in the 20th verse, were by the

^r [Clem. Alex. Strom. iv. 17.]

^t Ἐχουσιν χώραν εὐσεβῶν.

^s Edit. Cotelerii, chap. l.

ancient Jews also mystically expounded of the receptacles of the souls of the righteous till the resurrection. For in the second apocryphal book of Esdras^x, (as we number it,) after some curious questions propounded by the author to his angel, concerning the state of the world to come, the angel is brought in thus answering: "Did not the souls also of the righteous ask questions of these things in their chambers, saying, How long shall I hope in this fashion? When cometh the fruit of the floor of our reward? And unto these things, Uriel the arch-angel gave them answer, and said, Even when the number of seeds is filled in you;" that is, when the number of God's elect is accomplished, as our Church expresseth it in the Office for the Burial of the Dead. To the same purpose speaks St. John in the Revelation. "And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled^y."

But to return to St. Clement again: "the region of the godly," where all the faithful deceased, from the beginning of the world, inhabit, of which he here speaks, he in the beginning of his Epistle (as was observed at first in the explanation of my text,) calls, with reference to St. Peter, one of that number, "the place of glory^z;" because, according to the exposition of the Clementine Liturgy, of which I shall give you an account presently, they that are there behold the glory of Christ, though not in that full brightness, wherein it shall be seen at the day of His glorious appearance. And presently after, he terms the same place, speaking of St. Paul there, "the holy place^a," not the "most" holy place. For he seems to allude in that expression, as elsewhere in the same Epistle he doth, to the Temple at Jerusalem, which at the time of his writing it, was yet

^x Chap. iv. 35, 36.

^y Chap. vi. 9—11.

^z Τόπον τῆς δόξης. [c. 5.]

^a Τὸν ἁγίον τόπον. [ib.]

standing^b; wherein there was “the sanctuary,” or “holy place;” and within it the “sanctum sanctorum,” “the holy of holies,” both figures of the heavenly things. He altogether seems, therefore, to have thought “the region of the godly deceased,” to be a part of the heavenly regions, as the sanctuary was a part of the temple; and near to the highest region of the heavens, as the sanctuary was near the holy of holies. But I dare not venture too far into these curious and abstruse questions. Only I note, that upon this account, some of the Fathers, as St. Cyprian, St. Ambrose, and others, stuck not to call the place of the separate spirits of good men by the name of “heaven,” or “the heavens,” meaning, as it appears^c, not the *aditum*, or inmost apartment of the heavens, where “the throne of the Majesty on high” is seated, and the *φῶς ἀπρόσιτον*, “the unapproachable light” shines; but a heavenly mansion near to it. Whence also the ancient Hebrews were wont to say of the separate spirits of the righteous, that they are “under the throne of glory.”

But again, as to St. Clement’s “region of the godly,” where the spirits of all the faithful deceased from the beginning of the world inhabit, we have a clearer account of it in the Clementine Liturgy, in the Office for the Dead^d; where the entrance of good souls into that state of bliss, which presently succeeds death, is said to be their admission “into the region of the godly released from their bodies; into the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of all those that have pleased God, and obeyed His will, from the beginning of the world: where all sorrow, grief, and mourning is banished^e.” And presently after, the same region is called “the land of those that see there the glory of Christ^f.”

Of the same “region of godly souls,” Justin Martyr plainly speaks in his Dialogue with Trypho, not very far from the beginning of it: where, among the Catholic doctrines taught him when he first became Christian, he delivers this for one,

^b [This is not now the opinion of the learned. See Lardner.]

^c Vid. Ambros. de Bono Mortis, cap. 10, 11. et eundem ad Michæam, obs. 2.

^d Vid. Constit. Apost. viii. 41. [Bull could hardly have considered the Apo-

stolical Constitutions to have been the work of Clement. They were probably written in the third or fourth-century.]

^e Εἰς χώραν εὐσεβῶν ἀνειμένων.

^f Τῶν ἁγίων ἐν αὐτῇ τὴν δόξαν τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

“That the souls of the godly” (after death till the resurrection) “remain in a certain better region, and unrighteous and wicked souls in an evil one^g.” And yet the same Justin Martyr, in the same book^h, condemns it as an error in the Gnostics, that they held, “That as soon as they die, their souls are received up into heavenⁱ :” i. e. the highest heaven.

Remarkable is the Catholic consent here. Even those Doctors of the Church, that fancied the place of godly souls to be I know not what subterraneous region; being led into that error (for such I take it to be) by the ambiguity of the Greek word *ἄδης*, yet acknowledge the godly souls there to be in a very happy condition. So that, though they differed from other Doctors of the Church, as to the situation (if I may so speak) of the place of the separate spirits of good men, yet as to their state, they well enough agreed with them. Thus Irenæus is known expressly to have delivered that opinion, in his fifth book^k. Yet the same Father, in his second book^l, from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, concludes, “that every sort of men,” (i. e. both good and bad) “receive their deserved habitation even before the judgment^m.” And he somewhere tells us, that the souls in paradise begin there their incorruptible stateⁿ, viz. of bliss. Again, in his fifth book^o, he expressly indeed distinguisheth paradise from the kingdom of heaven, and reckons it a lower degree of happiness “to enjoy the delights of paradise^p,” than “to be counted worthy to dwell in heaven^q.” But yet he acknowledgeth in both our Saviour shall be seen, “according as they shall be worthy or meet who see Him^r.” Which the author of the Questions and Answers to the Orthodox, in his answer to Quest. 75. thus explains, “That the souls in paradise do enjoy the conversation and sight of angels and archangels, *and also of our Saviour*

^g Τὰς μὲν τῶν εὐσεβῶν ψυχὰς ἐν χρείται ποι χάριτι μένειν, τὰς δὲ ἀδίκους καὶ πονηρὰς ἐν χείρονι. [c. 5. p. 107.]

^h P. 307.

ⁱ Ἀμα τῷ ἀποθνήσκειν, τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἀναλαμβάνεσθαι εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν. [c. 80. p. 178.]

^k Chap. 31.

^l Chap. 63. [See the passage quoted at p. 21.]

^m Dignam habitationem unamquamque gentem percipere etiam ante iudicium. [c. 34. p. 168.]

ⁿ Justos qui sunt in paradiso, auspicari incorruptelam.

^o Chap. 36.

^p Τῆς τοῦ παραδείσου τρυφῆς ἀπολαύειν. [p. 337.]

^q Καταξιωθῆναι τῆς ἐν οὐρανῷ διατριβῆς.

^r Καθὼς ἔξισι ἔσονται οἱ ὀρώντες αὐτόν.

Christ by way of vision^s;" viz. such in its kind, though in degree far more excellent, as whereby the Prophets saw him of old. But to return to Irenæus, he concludes his discourse in that chapter thus; that it is the Divine ordination and disposition, that those that are saved should *per gradus proficere*, "proceed by degrees" to their perfect beatitude: that is, that they should, as St. Ambrose speaks^t, "through the refreshments of paradise, arrive to the full glories of the heavenly kingdom^u."

Tertullian also, in his Apology^x, when he was yet orthodox, calls paradise "a place of divine pleasantness, appointed to receive the spirits of the saints^y."

Nay, in his book of the Soul^z, which he wrote after he was seduced into the heresy of Montanus, though he so far contradicts his former sentiments, as to lock up paradise, and place a flaming sword at the gate of it, against all but the souls of martyrs, and discourseth very oddly of the place and state of other good souls; yet he plainly signifieth, that the Catholics of his time, against whom he wrote, were of a contrary belief: and he is forced at last himself to confess, that the good souls in that subterraneous region that he speaks of, do enjoy a happiness not to be despised, that they do, "in the bosom of Abraham, receive the comfort of the resurrection to come^a;" that is, that they are at present in a state of rest and happiness, and live in a sure and certain hope of a greater happiness at the resurrection. So that his contention with the Catholics in this question, savours of a delight that he had to pick quarrels with them, and seems to be a mere strife of words, whilst in the main he acknowledged the thing itself which they affirmed^b.

Now to proceed; from what hath been said, it appears that the doctrine of the distinction of the joys of paradise, the portion of good souls in their state of separation, from that

^s Κατ' ὁπτασίαν δὲ καὶ τοῦ σωτῆρος Χριστοῦ. [in ed. Just. Mart. p. 470.]

^t Ad Michæam, obs. 2.

^u Per paradisum ad regnum pervenire.

^x c. 47.

^y Locum divinæ amœnitatis recipiendis sanctorum spiritibus destinatum.

^z De Anima, c. 55.

^a In Abrahæ sinu expectandæ resurrectionis solatium capere.

^b [Tertullian's opinions on this subject, may also be seen, de Resur. Carnis, c. 17, 43. adv. Marc. iv. 34.]

yet fuller and most complete beatitude of the kingdom of heaven after the resurrection, consisting in that clearest vision of God, which the Holy Scriptures call seeing Him “face to face,” is far from being Popery, as some have ignorantly censured it; for we see it was the current doctrine of the first and purest ages of the Church. I add, that it is so far from being Popery, that it is directly the contrary. For it was the Popish Convention at Florence, that first boldly defined against the sense of the primitive Christians, “That those souls, which having contracted the blemish of sin, are either in their bodies or out of them purged from it, do presently go into heaven, and there clearly behold God Himself, one God in three Persons, as He is^c.” And this decree they made, partly to establish their superstition of praying to the saints deceased, whom they would needs make us believe to see and know all our necessities and concerns *in speculo Trinitatis*, “in the glass of the Trinity,” as they call it, and so to be fit objects of our religious invocation; but chiefly to introduce their purgatory, and that the prayers of the ancient Church for the dead, might be thought to be founded on a supposition, that the souls of some faithful persons after death go into a place of grievous torment, out of which they may be delivered by the prayers of the Church, always provided there be a sum of money, either left by themselves, or supplied by their friends for them. A gross imposition, that hath been, I am persuaded, the eternal ruin of thousands of souls, for whom our blessed Lord shed His most precious blood, who might have escaped hell, if they had not trusted to a purgatory.

^dThe prayers for the dead, used in the ancient Church, (those I mean that were more properly prayers, that is, either deprecations or petitions,) were of two sorts; either the common and general commemoration of all the faithful deceased at the oblation of the Holy Eucharist, or the particular prayers used at the funerals of any of the faithful lately deceased^e. The

^c Illas animas quæ post contractam peccati maculam, &c.

^d [The Bishop copied the whole of this paragraph into his Answer to the Queries of the Bishop of Meaux.]

^e [The following expressions may be

found in the Ante-Nicean Fathers. Oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis annua die facimus. *Tertul. de Corona*, c. 3. Enimvero et pro anima ejus orat, et refrigerium interim adpostulat ei, et in prima resurrectione consortium, et

former respected the consummation of bliss at the resurrection, like as that which our Church useth both in the Office for the Communion, and in that for the Burial of the Dead; which indeed seems to be no more than what we daily pray for in that petition of the Lord's Prayer, (if we rightly understand it,) "Thy kingdom come." The latter were also charitable omens and good wishes of the faithful living, as it were accompanying the soul of the deceased to the joys of paradise, of which they believed it already possessed, as the ancient author of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, in the last chapter of that book, plainly informs us. In a word, let any understanding and unprejudiced person attentively observe the prayers for the dead in the most undoubtedly ancient Liturgies, especially those in the Clementine Liturgy, and those mentioned in the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, and he will be so far from believing the Romish purgatory on the account of those prayers, that he will be forced to confess they make directly against it. For (to omit other arguments) they all run, as even that prayer for the dead, which is unadvisedly left by the Romanists in their own canon of the Mass, as a testimony against themselves, in this form, "For all that are in peace, or at rest in Christ." Now how can they be said to be in peace, or at rest in Christ, that are supposed to fry in the scorching flames of purgatory, and to endure pains, equal to the pains of hell, the duration of those only excepted?

Indeed the Romish purgatory is of a much later date than prayers for the dead, and is an invention utterly unknown to the Catholic Church, for the first three hundred years at least. We have already heard the apostolic Saint, Bishop, and Martyr, Clement, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, acknowledging but one place for the souls of all that have finished

offert annuis diebus dormitionis ejus. *Ib. de Monogamia*, c. 10. Sacrificia pro eis semper offerimus quoties in martyrum passiones et dies anniversaria commemoratione celebramus. *Cypr. ep. 34*. Dies eorum quibus excedunt annotate, ut commemorationes eorum inter memorias martyrum celebrare possimus. *Ib. ep. 37*. . . . et celebrentur hic a nobis oblationes et sacrificia ob commemorationes

eorum. *Ib.* Si quis istinc nostrum prior divinæ dignationis celeritate præcesserit, perseveret apud Dominum nostra dilectio, pro fratribus et sororibus nostris apud misericordiam patris non cesset oratio. *Ib. ep. 57*. . . . ac si quis hoc fecisset, non offerretur pro eo, nec sacrificium pro dormitione ejus celebraretur. *Ib. ep. 66*.

their course in charity from the beginning of the world; and that place to be a safe and comfortable refuge and shelter to them till the resurrection, a place of glory, and therefore no purgatory. And to prevent all cavils, if any man shall question whom St. Clement means by those that have finished their course in charity; I answer, even all the elect of God, all that are not reprobates, all that shall be saved, without exception. For so He Himself most expressly tells us a little before the place cited: "In charity all the elect of God have finished their course: without charity nothing (or no man) is accepted of God^f." Far, therefore, was this truly apostolic Pope and Bishop of Rome from the dream of his most degenerate successors, that any man who dies with that repentance only, which is called *attrition*, and is void of charity or the love of God above all things, can ever be in the number of God's elect, or be saved at last by an after-game in purgatory. Again, in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, which is affirmed to be his by the learned men of the Church of Rome, and that not without very probable reasons^g, and however is undoubtedly of the first antiquity, he doth as it were professedly oppose the figment of purgatory. For thus he writes in the beginning of chap. 8. "Whilst, therefore, we are upon earth, let us repent. For we are as clay in the hand of the artificer. For as the potter, if he make a vessel and finds it awry or broken in his hands, may again fashion it anew; but if beforehand he hath thrown it into the fiery furnace, there is no more help for it, he cannot make it better: so also we, as long as we are in this world, may repent, from the whole heart, of the evils we have done in the flesh, that we may be saved of the Lord, whilst we have time of repentance. For after we have left this world, we can no longer confess, or repent^h." What sophistry is able to reconcile this divinity with the Romish purgatory? Surely, if there be no repentance at all for sin in the other world, there can be no satisfactory suffering for sin there. The holy God cannot be satisfied or atoned by the sufferings of those men, who have no repentance of those sins for which they suffer.

^f Ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἐτελειώθησαν πάντες οἱ ἐκλεκτοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ· δίχα ἀγάπης οὐδὲν εὐάρεστόν ἐστι τῷ Θεῷ.

^g [This has not been the opinion of later critics.]

^h Ὡς οὖν ἐσμὲν ἐπὶ γῆς μετανοήσωμεν.

And if the Papists will suppose the souls in purgatory to suffer the most grievous pains of it, without a deep repentance for the sins that brought them thither, they must make them very graceless wretches indeed, as like the damned in their wickedness, as they fancy them to be in their torments.

But to go on. Let us hear Justin Martyr again in that place which we have before in part cited out of his Dialogue with Tryphoⁱ, where he brings in an old man, appearing to him in his philosophic retirement and solitude, (which some think to have been the address of a real man, others, an angelical apparition, others, only a fiction of a person usual in dialogues,) and teaching him the Christian doctrine, as of other things, so especially of man's soul, in opposition to the vain philosophy of Plato, on which he then doted. And of the soul he is thus said to have spoken: "I do not affirm that all souls die; for this indeed would be advantageous to the wicked. What then? I say that the souls of the godly remain in a certain better region, but unrighteous and wicked souls in an evil one, there waiting for the time of judgment^k." Where the grave instructor manifestly undertakes to speak of all souls; and distributes the universality of souls only into two ranks, godly and wicked souls; and he allots but two places to these two sorts, a better region to the godly souls, and an evil one to the wicked; and, lastly, he confines both sorts of souls to their respective places till the day of judgment. He must be very dextrous at reconciling contradictions, that shall undertake to bring this doctrine to any accord with that of the Romanists concerning their purgatory. The same excellent author again in his second Apology, (as it is reckoned in our vulgar editions,) delivers this as the received doctrine of the Catholic Christians of his time^l, "That the souls of the wicked subsisting even after death, feel punishment; but the souls of good men live happily free from punishments^m." No good man, therefore, need fear a purgatory after death, if this scholar of the Apostles, as he somewhere calls himself, were rightly taught.

ⁱ P. 223. [p. 107.]

^k Τὸν τῆς κρ'σεως ἐκδιεχόμενας χρόνον τότε.

^l P. 66.

^m Κολάζεσθαι ἐν αἰσθήσει καὶ μετὰ θάνατον οἷσας τὰς τῶν ἀδίκων ψυχὰς. τὰς δὲ τῶν σπουδαίων ἀπηλλαγμένας τῶν τιμωριῶν εὖ διάγειν. [Apol. i. 20. p. 55.]

I might lead you, after the same manner, through the writings of the following Doctors of the first three hundred years, and by clear testimonies out of them make it evident, that although some of them had otherwise some odd conceits concerning the future state of men; yet not one of them ever acknowledged that purgatory, which the Church of Rome hath imposed on the belief of Christians at this day. But the time bids me hasten to a conclusion.

I shall, therefore, only add one testimony more out of an author, that most probably lived after the third century, to shew, that even then the article of purgatory was a stranger to the Church of God. The author of the Questions and Answers to the Orthodox, in his answer to the seventy-fifth question, having said, that in this life there is no difference as to worldly concerns between the righteous and the wicked, he immediately adds: “But after death, *εὐθὺς*, ‘presently’ the righteous are separated from the unrighteous; for they are carried by angels into their meet places. And the souls of the righteous are conveyed into paradise, where they enjoy the conversation and sight of angels and archangels, and of our Saviour Christ also by way of vision: according to what is said, when we are absent from the body, we are present with the Lord. But the souls of the unrighteous are carried to the infernal regions, &c. And they” (that is, both sorts of souls) “are kept in their meet places till the day of the resurrection and recompense.” I will not dishonour any of your understandings so far, as to think any explanation necessary, to shew you, how this testimony makes directly against the fable of purgatory.

In a word, the true rise and growth of the doctrine of purgatory, is plainly this. About the middle of the third century, Origenⁿ, among other Platonie conceits of his, vented this, that all the faithful (the Apostles themselves not excepted) shall at the day of judgment pass through a purgatory fire, the fire of the great conflagration, which they shall endure for a longer or shorter time, according as their imperfections require a greater

ⁿ [Some of Origen's opinions concerning the state of the soul after death, may be seen in the following places: de Princip. ii. 6. p. 106. de Oratione, c. 11. p. 215. e. Celsum, viii. 44. p. 77 f. in Levit. Hom. vii. 2. p. 222. in Reg. Hom. ii. ad fin. p. 498. in Psalm. ix. 18. p. 587. in Psalm. Hom. iii. 1. p. 663, 664.]

or lesser purgation. And in this conceit, directly contrary to many express texts of Scripture, he was followed for the greatness of his name by some other great men in the Church of God. But how different this purgatory is from the Roman, every man of sense will presently discern. Afterwards, about the end of the fourth, or the beginning of the fifth century, St. Austin began to doubt, whether this imagined purgation were not to be made in the interval between death and the resurrection, at least as to the souls of the more imperfect Christians. And it is strange to observe, how he is off and on in this question. And yet it is not strange neither, considering how easily he may, nay, how necessarily he must be at a loss, that leaves the plain and beaten path of the Holy Scriptures and primitive tradition, to hunt after his own conceits and imaginations. Towards the end of the fifth century, Pope Gregory, a man known to be superstitious enough, undertook dogmatically to assert the problem, and with might and main set himself to prove it, chiefly from the idle stories of apparitions of souls coming out of purgatory. Four hundred years after, Pope John the Eighteenth, or, as some say, the Nineteenth, instituted a holyday, wherein he severely required all men to pray for the souls in purgatory: as if the Catholic Church before him had been deficient in their charity, and forgotten the miserable souls in that place of torment. At length the cabal at Florence, in the year 1439, turned the dream into an article of faith, so that now they are damned to hell, that will not believe a purgatory: and the Pope's vassals still tenaciously hold and fiercely maintain the doctrine, not so much for the godliness as for the gain of it.

I have now said all that I can think necessary concerning the state of separate souls, good and bad, keeping myself from all needless curiosities, within the bounds of the Holy Scriptures, and the received doctrine of the primitive Catholic Church.

The sum of all is this. All good men without exception are in the whole interval between their death and resurrection, as to their souls, in a very happy condition; but after the resurrection, they shall be yet more happy, receiving then their full reward, their perfect consummation of bliss, both in soul

and body, the most perfect bliss they are capable of, according to the divers degrees of virtue, through the grace of God on their endeavours, attained by them in this life. On the other side, all the wicked as soon as they die are very miserable as to their souls; and shall be yet far more miserable, both in soul and body, after the day of judgment, proportionably to the measure of sins committed by them here on earth. This is the plain doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, and of the Church of Christ in its first and best ages, and this we may trust to. Other inquiries there are of more uncertainty than use, and we ought not to trouble or perplex ourselves about them.

But least of all are we fiercely to dispute about the places of separate souls where determinately they are stated. We should rather imitate here the modesty of the apostolic Doctors, who (as you have heard) were content to say of the souls of men, both good and bad, after death, that they are gone "to their own proper places, to their due places, to their meet places, to places appointed by God" for them.

I shall now conclude with a brief and serious application.

First, This discourse is matter of abundant consolation to all good men, when death approacheth them. They are sure, not only of a blessed resurrection at the last day, but of a reception into a very happy place and state in the mean time. They shall be immediately after death put in the possession of paradise, and there rejoice in the certain expectation of a crown of glory, to be bestowed on them at the day of recompense. Fear not, good man, when death comes; for the good angels are ready to receive thy soul, and convey it into Abraham's bosom: a place, wherever it is, of rest, and that not a stupid insensible rest, but a rest attended with a lively perception of a far greater joy and delight, than this whole world can afford. A place of the best society and company, where thou shalt be gathered to the spirits of just men, to the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and Confessors, and familiarly converse with those Saints and excellent persons, whom thou hast heard of and admired, and whose examples thou hast endeavoured to imitate. A place that is the rendezvous of the holy Angels of God, and which the Son of God Himself, visits and illustrates with the rays of His glory. A place

where there shall be no wicked man to corrupt or offend thee, no devil to tempt thee, no sinful flesh to betray thee. A place of full security, where thou shalt be out of all possible danger of being undone and miserable for ever. A place from whence all sorrow (because all sin) is banished; where there is nothing but joy, and yet more joy still expected. This is the place that death calls thee to. Why therefore shouldest thou be afraid of dying? yea, rather, why shouldest thou not, when God calls thee to it, willingly and cheerfully die, desiring "to depart, and to be with Jesus Christ, which is far better?" If thou wert to fall into a lethargic state when thou diest, and have no perception of comfort till the last day; if darkness were then to overshadow thee till the light of Christ's glorious appearance at the resurrection came upon thee; this might reasonably make thee unwilling to die, and desirous to continue longer here, where there is some comfort, some enjoyment of Christ, though imperfect. If such a purgatory, as the supposition of the Roman Church hath painted out to the vulgar, were to receive thee, well mightest thou be not only unwilling, but also horribly afraid to die. But, God be thanked, Christ and His Apostles, and the disciples of the Apostles, have taught us much better things. "Wherefore, let us comfort one another with these words."

Secondly, This discourse deserves seriously to be considered by all wicked men. If they die such—and who knows how soon he may die? they are immediately consigned to a place and state of irreversible misery. They have trod in the steps of Judas in this life, and shall presently after death march to the same dismal place where Judas is. A place where there is no company but the devil and his angels, and those lost souls that have been seduced by them. A place of horrid darkness, where there shines not the least glimmering of light or comfort. A place of wretched spirits, that are continually vexed at the sad remembrance of their former sins and follies, and feel the wrath of God for them, and tremble at the apprehension of a greater wrath yet to come; who presently taste the cup of divine vengeance, and are heart-sick to think of the time when they must drink up the full dregs of it. This,

1 Thess. iv. 18.

O sinner, is the miserable place and state whereinto thou shalt immediately enter when thou diest, if thou diest as now thou art.

But thou wilt say, I am not such a wretch as Judas, who betrayed our Saviour Christ to death, and sold his Lord and Master for money. I answer, But flatter not thyself; it is true, thou hast not sinned in the same instance, nor perhaps to the same degree; but sure I am thou hast sinned in the same kind. For how often (if thou beest a voluptuous man) hast thou bartered and parted with thy interest in thy Saviour Jesus, for the satisfaction of a vile lust, and the enjoyment of a transient sinful pleasure! How often, if thou beest a covetous man, hast thou wilfully transgressed the laws of the holy Jesus, by lying, cheating, and unjust actions, to gain a few pieces of glittering earth, perhaps of lesser value than Judas was bribed with! How often, if thou beest a vainglorious, ambitious man, hast thou made thy conscience give way to thy vainly conceited honours! How often hast thou sold thy Redeemer for the mere breath of the people! Thou hast therefore played the Judas, and if thou diest without repentance, to Judas's place thou must go.

Do not deceive thyself with the thoughts of a reprieve till the day of judgment, or think thou shalt be in an insensible state till then, and not tormented before that time; for immediately after death, thy state of misery shall commence. Do not entertain thyself with the desperate hopes of a purgatory, or the advantage of a broken plank to save thee after the shipwreck of death. In the same miserable state thou diest, thou shalt continue in to the day of judgment, and then thy misery shall be consummated. "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest He tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver^p." To shut up all, let us pray and labour that we may never, never be gathered, or come into the place of Judas, the place and state of reprobate and for ever lost spirits; from this, good Lord, deliver us: that when we die, we may go to the region of the godly, to paradise, to Abraham's bosom, and at the resurrection may sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. And in order hereunto, let us here thoroughly purge

"ourselves from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, perfect-

ing holiness in the fear of God^a, for there is no purgation to be expected in the other life. Yea, let us endeavour to excel in virtue here, that so we may have a more abundant entrance both into the joys of paradise, and also into the fuller glories of the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Which God of His infinite mercy grant, through the same Jesus Christ: to Whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, &c.

^a 2 Cor. vii. 1.

[These two Sermons were republished in 1765, by Leonard Chappellow, B. D. "together with some Extracts relating to the same subject, taken from writers of distinguished note and character, with a Preface." They were also noticed by the writer of "An Historical Review

of the Controversy concerning an Intermediate State, and the separate Existence of the Soul, between Death and the General Resurrection," published in 1765, where some defects in Bishop Bull's reasoning are pointed out.]

SERMON IV.^a

THE LOW AND MEAN CONDITION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN CONSIDERED; AS ALSO THE SINGULAR GRACE AND FAVOUR OF GOD VOUCHSAFED TO HER; AND THAT RESPECT WHICH IS DUE TO HER FROM US UPON THAT ACCOUNT, WHEREIN THE INVOCATION OF HER BY THE PAPISTS IS CONFUTED.

LUKE i. 48, 49.

For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done for me great things; and holy is His name.

UPON the very hearing of my text read, every man will presently perceive it to be a part of the Magnificat, or the divine song of the blessed Virgin, into which she brake forth upon the prophetic salutation of the inspired Elizabeth to her, recited from ver. 41 to 45, inclusively. For this song is daily sung or rehearsed in our churches; and may it ever continue so to be, both for the excellency of it, and because thereby the prophecy of the blessed Virgin, in my text, is in part fulfilled; that future generations should call her blessed.

The song, as Grotius thinks, hath respect to the time of the children of Israel's departure out of Egypt; by which the time of the Messias was figured and typified, not without a wonderful congruity of circumstances disposed by Divine Providence.

There was then a Miriam, that is, a Mary, a virgin and prophetess, the sister of Aaron, leading a female troop in the divine praises^b. And here there is another Miriam, or Mary, over-

^a [This Sermon was preached some time after the year 1671.]

^b Exod. xv. 20, 21.

shadowed with the Holy Ghost, to be celebrated above all women, and therefore celebrating the praises of God. There was then, in the second place, an Elizabeth^c, the wife of Aaron; and here there is another Elizabeth, married to a priest of the line of Aaron.

Throughout this excellent song, the sacred Virgin expresseth a deep sense of her own unworthiness, and, upon that account, a profound resentment of the singular favour of the Almighty bestowed on her. Her Magnificat is not a magnifying of herself, but of the Lord. For thus it begins, "My soul doth magnify the Lord;" not myself, who am but a poor unworthy handmaid of the Lord; but the Lord Himself, Who hath so highly dignified and advanced me, though unworthy. She first sings in the lowest and deepest note of humility, and then raiseth her song to the highest strain of gratitude and thanksgiving, admiring the transcendent honour to which, by the goodness of God, she was exalted. For in the former part of my text, she sincerely acknowledgeth the very mean condition she was in, when the Divine grace surprised her; "For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden:" and then she sets forth the superlative dignity that God had advanced her to; "for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

Let us a little stay upon that lower ground, from whence the holy Virgin takes her rise, and consider her humble acknowledgment of her own meanness and unworthiness, expressed in these words, *Ἐπέβλεψεν ἐπὶ τὴν ταπείνωσιν τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ*, which our translators have well rendered, "He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden." For the word *ταπείνωσις* signifies here the same with *ταπεινότης*, a mean, base, or vile condition; as "our body of a base condition," or "^dour vile body^e." And it is often by the Seventy joined with a verb, signifying "to behold," "respect," or "regard," as here, and used to express a poor mean condition; or, which is more, an afflicted condition, whereby one is brought very low, as we use to phrase it. So 2 Kings xiv. 26. "The Lord saw the affliction of

^c [Elisheba, Exod. vi. 23: which is the same as Elizabeth.]

^d Phil. iii. 21.

^e *Τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν.*

Israel^f." And Psalm xxv. 18. "Look upon mine affliction^g." But it is especially to be noted, that the words of Hannah, upon much a like occasion^h, are in the LXX. almost the same with the words of my text. "If indeed Thou wilt look upon the affliction of Thine handmaidenⁱ." Erasmus had long ago observed this, and corrected the vulgar Latin, too closely followed here by our older English translation, which hath it, "He hath regarded," *humilitatem ancillæ*, "the humility, or lowliness of His handmaiden," as that signifies the virtue of the mind, which we commonly call humility, but is more properly called modesty, and by the Greeks termed *ταπεινοφροσύνη*. This erroneous translation, the pretenders to merit at Rome had greedily catched at, and thence inferred, that the blessed Virgin was, for the merit of her humility, so highly advanced by God. But Erasmus clearly evinced, that *ταπεινώσις* is rather in this place, to be rendered *parvitas*, *vilitas*, "the littleness," or "vileness;" that is, "the low and mean estate" of Thine handmaiden. The ignorant and angry monks indeed, fell very foul upon that excellent man for this his criticism; whence there arose a proverb in that time, concerning any man that should attempt to amend that which could not be better expressed, *vult corrigere magnificat*, "the man would correct the magnificat." But the more learned Papists are since grown wiser, and have subscribed to the interpretation of Erasmus; among whom is the judicious Maldonat, who gives us this clear account of it: "If we weigh," saith he, "the sense of these words, it is so much the less credible, that Mary should here have spoken of her own virtue, by how much more she excelled in that virtue. For I cannot think it to be humility, for a man not only to know, but also to proclaim himself to be humble. Humility is the only virtue that knows not itself: and I cannot tell how it comes to pass, that the humble person, as soon as he knows, or makes known, his own humility, loseth it. And besides, it was not the design of the most humble and holy Virgin to declare, that by her merits she obtained so great a benefit; but rather to profess herself utterly unworthy of such a favour. She

^f Εἶδε Κύριος τὴν ταπεινώσιν Ἰσραήλ.

^g Εἶδε τὴν ταπεινώσιν μου.

^h 1 Sam. i. 11.

ⁱ Ἐὰν ἐπιβλέπων ἐπιβλέψῃς ἐπὶ τὴν ταπεινώσιν τῆς δοῦλης σου.

intended not therefore to say, that her virtue, but rather her low and mean estate, and, in a word, her unworthiness, was regarded by God: that although she was altogether unworthy of it, yet God was pleased to vouchsafe her so great an honour. Thus to speak became her, both as a virgin, and an humble and modest one^k." So far that learned Jesuit. In short, there is no doubt, but that the blessed Virgin was as humble and lowly in her spirit, as she was low and mean in her fortune and condition, and that God, in bestowing so singular a grace and favour on her, had respect to that virtue of her mind, more than to the lowness of her estate. But yet we say, that it was the meanness of her condition, that she herself intended here to express, not her own transcendent humility, which, if she had intended to express, she had lost: but by overlooking that virtue of her mind, and fixing her thoughts on her mean and unworthy condition, she indeed exercised that humility, of which she was a true owner. And therefore the same Maldonat commends those interpreters who resolve, "that Mary in this place did not profess, but practise humility^l."

But what was the low estate of this blessed handmaiden of the Lord? I answer, it was a state of poverty. So poor she was, so mean her portion, that she could arrive to no higher a fortune, than to be the espoused wife of a poor carpenter. So poor, that in her childbirth she was not able to procure a room (even in her greatest necessity) in that inn, to which she came as a guest; but, being neglected by her richer kindred of the royal tribe and family of David, lay indeed in the straw, and was brought to bed in a stable, and that in a cave under ground, in the vicinity of the poor town of Bethlehem, according to the tradition of the most ancient Doctors of the Church^m. In the very place it was, (as some have probably conjectured,) where poor David, the ancestor of the Messias, and His most illustrious type, fed his sheep, and from that mean kind of life was, by the singular grace and favour of God, called to be the king and ruler of His peopleⁿ. So mean she was, that at her

^k Maldonat in loc.

^l Mariam hoc loco humilitatem exercuisse, non significasse.

^m [Ἐν σπηλαίῳ τινὶ σύνεγγυς τῆς κώμης. Justin Martyr. Dial. cum Tryph.

§. 78. Origen says, that the cave and the manger in it, were to be seen in his days. Contr. Cels. §. 51.]

ⁿ Psalm lxxviii. 70—72.

purification, her great and generous piety was confined to the offering of the poor, according to the law of Moses, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons:" a lamb, (the prescribed offering to those of ability,) her purse could not reach to^o. Lastly, so poor she was, and still continued, that her blessed Son, when dying, thought it necessary to recommend her to the charitable care of His most beloved disciple^p.

From all which we may learn, that innocent and virtuous poverty is consistent with the truest felicity; and that those who are richest in grace, the best of God's saints, and most regarded by Him, may be of a low and despicable estate in this world. If, therefore, thou sincerely lovest God, and art truly devoted to His service, how poor otherwise and contemptible and miserable soever thou mayest be, thou art a happy man: happy and blessed, as the blessed Virgin was: yea, blessed, as her blessed Son, our Lord and Saviour, was here on earth; Who was born of poor parents, in the meanest circumstances, and afterwards chose a life of poverty; so great, that whereas "the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, He had not where to lay His head^q;" so great, that He lived upon the charity of good people that "ministered to Him^r!" The poor are either good or bad; that is, the poverty of men is found either in the way of righteousness, or in the way of wickedness. The good and virtuous poor man, though he deserves our greatest pity, (as by that is signified our propense inclination to do him good, and relieve his necessities,) yet he is also an object of our greatest esteem and admiration. This is the man that baffles the devil's challenge to God, concerning holy Job, "that serves God for nought," that courts virtue without regard to her dowry, that is, any visible dowry, any present pay; and by a mighty faith rests satisfied with the future reward. On the other side, the poor man, that is as wicked in the sight of God as he is wretched in this world, is of all men the most miserable. For how great must be the misery of that man, who, being poor towards God as well as men, shall consequently be miserable,

^o Luke ii. 22—24; compared with Lev. xii. 6—8.

^p John xix. 25—27.

^q Matt. viii. 20.

^r Mark xv. 41; Luke viii. 3.

not only in this, but in the other life also! This is a poor wretch indeed.

And yet this is the case of every man that is so discontented with his poverty as to murmur at the providence of God; that seeks by lying and stealing, and other irregular courses, to redress his poverty; that is as proud as he is poor; that is unthankful to his benefactors; that loves that world which loves not him; that being unhappy in this life, yet seeks not heartily after the happiness of the other life.

But may not he that is rich in this world, be also happy in the other? Yes! But then he must be after a sort assimilated and made like to the poor; viz. by being poor in spirit. By an humble mind in a high fortune, and by condescending to men of low estate; by not trusting in, or setting his heart upon, those worldly riches that he is possessor of, but earnestly coveting the heavenly treasures; by temperance at his full table, by intermixing sometimes religious fastings with his feasts, and by exercises of mortification; by delighting more in the service of God and virtuous actions, than in sensual pleasures; lastly, by paring off his superfluities, and expending them in works of piety and charity. Upon these terms only, he that is rich in this world may reasonably hope to be blessed and happy also in the other.

It is an excellent advice that St. James, in his Epistle, gives in a few words both to poor and rich*. “Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.” Where the sense of the former part of the advice, is clearly this: Let not the man that is poor among you Christians, and contemptible in the world, be cast down or dejected at his poverty, but rather let him rejoice, considering the sublime and happy estate, to which by Christianity he is exalted, and let him therein glory. His advancement is, that he is a Christian, for by this one name an immense dignity is signified; viz. that he is a son of God, and a coheir with Christ in the heavenly kingdom. But what means the Apostle by the opposite clause, “but the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away?” I answer, that

* Chap. i. 9, 10.

the best interpreters[†] think, that the speech of the Apostle is here elliptical, and to be supplied by a verb of a contrary signification. As in that of St. Paul^u. "Forbidding to marry, and to abstain from meats," we must understand, (according to the supplement of our English translation,) "and commanding to abstain from meats." So here the speech is to be thus supplied: "But let the rich man hang down the head, and be humble, in that he is made low," in that a little time shall level him with the poorest man; "because as the flower of the grass," so he and his riches, "pass away." The scope of the Apostle is certainly this, to set before the rich their own vileness, that is, the instability of their condition, and by the consideration thereof, to cure the pride and insolence to which they are commonly incident. And the exhortation is the same with that of St. Paul^x. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate," &c.

But let us at length proceed to the second part of the text. The blessed Virgin having ingenuously acknowledged the low estate and condition, wherein the grace of God found her, immediately proceeds, in the next words, to declare the transcendent dignity of that estate, to which, by the same grace, she was now advanced: "For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

"From henceforth," that is, from this very time of my conception of the holy Jesus, and upon the account of it. "All generations," that is, all those generations, that from henceforth to the end of the world, shall believe on that Jesus who shall be born of me. "Shall call me blessed;" that is, shall acknowledge and proclaim me to be the most blessed and happy of women, congratulating the singular grace and favour of God vouchsafed to me. In the prosecution of this part of my text, I shall fix these bounds to my discourse. I. To shew you more particularly what was the singular grace and favour of God vouchsafed to the blessed Virgin. II. To explain more dis-

[†] [Grotius, Price, &c.]

^x 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

^u 1 Tim. iv. 3.

tinctly, what is that respect that is due to her from us upon that account.

I. What was the singular grace and favour bestowed on the blessed Virgin. A most transcendent favour it was. For,

1. She was of all the women, of all the virgins in Israel, elected and chosen by God, to be the instrument of bringing into the world the long-desired Messias. All the virtuous daughters of Jacob, a good while before the revelation of our Saviour, but especially in the age when He appeared, (the time wherein they saw the more punctual and remarkable prophecies concerning the coming of the Messias fulfilled,) desired, and were not without hopes each of them, that they might have had this honour done unto them. But it was granted to none of all those holy women and virgins, but to the Virgin Mary. And therefore, "all generations shall call her blessed."

2. The blessed Virgin Mary was the only woman that took off the stain and dishonour of her sex, by being the instrument of bringing that into the world, which should repair and make amends for the loss and damage brought to mankind, by the transgression of the first woman, Eve. By a woman, as the principal cause, we were first undone; and by a woman, as an instrument under God, a Saviour and Redecmer is born to us. And the blessed Virgin Mary is that woman. Hence Irenæus, in his fifth book^y, makes a comparison between the virgin Eve, (for such the ancients believed her to be, till after her transgression,) and the Virgin Mary. *Seductionem illam solutam*, &c. i. e. "That seduction being dissolved, whereby the virgin Eve designed for man was unhappily seduced: the Virgin Mary espoused to man, by the truth happily received the glad tidings from an angel. For as the former was seduced by the speech of an angel to flee from God, having transgressed His commandment; so the latter, by the word also of an angel, received the good news, *ut portaret Deum*, that she should bear God within her, being obedient to His word. And as the former was seduced to flee from God, so the latter was persnaded to obey God. So that the Virgin Mary became the comforter of the virgin Eve^z." Where the last words of the holy Martyr are grossly misinterpreted by the Latin translator, and have given

^y Chap. 19.

^z Uti virginis Evæ Virgo Maria fieret advocata.

occasion to the Papists to conclude from them, that Eve was saved by the intercession of the Virgin Mary. A most absurd conceit, unworthy of the learned and holy Father, or indeed of any man else of common sense; for who knows not that Eve was past all need of intercession, before ever the blessed Mary could be capable of making intercession for her? Doubtless the Greek word used by Irenæus here was *παράκλητος*, which, as it signifies "an advocate," so it also as frequently signifies "a comforter," and so ought to have been rendered here. But, you will say, how did Eve receive comfort from the blessed Virgin Mary? I answer, in that gracious promise delivered by God Himself in the sentence passed on the serpent, after Eve's seduction by him, where it is said, "that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head^a." Every man now knows, that the seed there spoken of, is Christ; and, consequently, that the individual woman, whose immediate seed He was to be, is the blessed Virgin Mary. The holy Virgin was the happy instrument of the saving incarnation of the Son of God, Who hath effectually crushed the old serpent, the devil, and destroyed his power over all those that believe on Himself; and thereby she became the instrument of comfort to Eve, and all other sinners. This is certainly all the good Father intended by that expression.

3. The blessed Virgin was consecrated to be a temple of the divinity in a singular manner. For the eternal Son of God, by an ineffable conjunction, united Himself to that human nature, which was miraculously conceived and formed in her, even whilst it was within her; and so He that was born of her, at the very time that He was born of her, was *θεάνθρωπος*, God and Man. O astonishing condescension of the Son of God! O wonderful advancement of the blessed Virgin! And therefore we daily sing in our *Te Deum*, "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ; Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man, Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb." Upon which account, the Fathers of the third General Council at Ephesus, convened against Nestorius, approved the title of *θεοτόκος*, "the mother of God," given to the blessed Virgin.

^a Gen. iii. 15.

They approved it, I say; they did not first invent it, as some have ignorantly affirmed. And therefore, they themselves in their Synodical Epistle say, that the holy Fathers before them doubted not to call the blessed Virgin *θεοτόκον*, *deiparam*, “the mother of God.” Indeed, an whole age before that Council, we find Eusebius expressly giving that title to the sacred Virgin in his third book of the life of Constantine^b. And Socrates, a most credible witness in this matter, in the seventh book of his Eccl. Hist.^c assures us, that Origen, long before Eusebius, largely explained and asserted that title, as applied to the blessed Virgin. And to go yet higher, we have heard Irenæus, who was a scholar to a scholar^d of the Apostles, magnifying the Virgin upon this account, that she did *portare Deum*, bear God within her. If she did *portare Deum*, she did *parere Deum*; if she bore God, she brought Him forth too; and so was *θεοτόκος*, “the mother of God,” that is, of Him that was God. Nay, the blessed Martyr, and disciple of the Apostles, Ignatius, in his Epistle to the Ephesians^e, feared not to say, “Our God Jesus Christ was conceived of Mary^f.” But what need we search after human authorities, when the inspired Elizabeth, in her divine rapture a little before my text^g, plainly gives the blessed Virgin the same title? “And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?” Where *μήτηρ τοῦ Κυρίου*, “the mother of our Lord,” is doubtless of the same import with *θεοτόκος*, “the mother of God:” for the title of “our Lord” belongs to Christ chiefly as He is “our God.” And we are to conceive Elizabeth, being filled with the Spirit, to have given this title of “her Lord” to the babe in the blessed Virgin’s womb, not according to the poor narrow, vulgar sense of the degenerate Jews, but according to the most august and highest sense of the word, viz. that He is so “our Lord,” as to be “our God” also. Now the necessary consequence of this dignity of the blessed Virgin is, that she remained for ever a Virgin, as

^b Chap. 43.^c Chap. 32.^d [Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna.]^e Edit. Voss. p. 27. [c. 18. p. 15. ed.

Cotelier.]

ἐκνοφορήθη ἐπὶ Μαρίας. [It was used by Hippolytus, Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria, Theonas, Alexander Bishop of Alexandria, Eusebius, &c.]

^g Ver. 43.^f Ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστὸς

the Catholic Church hath always held and maintained^h. For it cannot with decency be imagined, that the most holy vessel, which was thus once consecrated to be a receptacle of the Deity, should afterwards be desecrated and profaned by human use. And so much of the singular grace and favour vouchsafed to the blessed Virgin.

II. We are next to explain, What is that respect which is due to her from us upon that account. She herself in the text saith, "all generations shall call me blessed." Where the Romanists fancy, they have found a plain warrant for all that extravagant honour which they give the blessed Virgin; and that this is an express prediction of hers, that that should be done unto her, which they now do in the Church of Rome. Hence one of their celebrated commentators, that so understands the text, could not forbear thereupon to break out into this amazing acclamation to the Virgin Mary: *Vivat tuum decus, tua laus, tua gloria, quamdiu rident angeli, quamdiu rident homines, quamdiu vivet Christus, quamdiu Deus erit Deus, in omnia sæculorum sæcula*ⁱ. Which words, not without a kind of tremor, I thus English: "Let thy honour, thy praise, thy glory live, as long as angels live, as long as men shall live, as long as Christ shall live, as long as God shall be God, even for ever and ever." But how vain are these men! The expression of the blessed Virgin doubtless signifies but the same thing, though in a wider extent, with that of Leah upon the birth of her son Asher^k, where the LXX. hath it, "Happy am I, for the daughters shall call me blessed^l." No man can be so foolish as to imagine she meant, that the daughters should pray to her, and worship her; but only, that they should think and acknowledge her to be a happy woman. So here, when the holy Virgin saith, "all generations shall call me blessed;" she means no more, than that all generations should, upon the account of her bringing into the world the common Saviour, esteem and proclaim her the most blessed woman. And this we most willingly and gladly do.

We think and speak most respectfully of her, and do not

^h [Jer. Taylor also maintained her perpetual virginity. Life of Christ, §. 3. and Pearson in his Exposition of the Creed.]

ⁱ Cornelius a Lapide, in loc.

^k Gen. xxx. 13.

^l Μακαρία ἐγὼ ὅτι μακαριοῦσί με αἱ γυναῖκες.

ordinarily mention her name without a preface or epithet of honour, as "the holy," "the blessed" Virgin, and the like. We do, by the appointment of our Church, sing or rehearse in our daily service her excellent Magnificat; and thereby we testify our assent to, and complacence in, those singular favours that God is therein said to have bestowed on her; and, together with her, we finally return the praise and glory of all to God alone. We celebrate two annual festivals in her memorial, the Feasts of her Annunciation and Purification. And if we could think of any other honour that we could do her, without dishonouring God the Father, and His eternal Son, we would most willingly yield it to her. Wherefore the Papists are themselves egregious calumniators, when they charge us Protestants, that we are *beatæ Virginis conviciatores*^m, "reproachers of the blessed Virgin." We defy their charge; we honour the blessed Virgin as a most singular elect vessel of God; as one in the highest degree of all mere mortals honoured by God: but therefore, we will not yield her any of that honour that is peculiar to God; for God Himself hath told us, that He "will not give His glory to anotherⁿ." She saith indeed, that "all generations should call her blessed;" but not that any generation should call upon her to bless them. This had been a most arrogant sacrilegious speech, altogether unbecoming the most humble, as well as holy Virgin.

We have carefully read the holy Scriptures of the New Testament, and cannot find any one iota in them, that makes in the least for the invocation and adoration of the Virgin Mary. Nay, we find the stream of holy writ carrying and directing all our prayers and supplications to God alone, through Jesus Christ, the only Mediator. And for the blessed Virgin, we cannot be so stupid as not to remark and observe the great silence concerning her in sacred history, after the relation of her bringing forth our Saviour, and her presentation of Him in the Temple, and their exile into Egypt, and return to Nazareth. After this we hear of her but seldom, and that only occasionally. Once she is mentioned as present, and receiving a check from our Saviour, at the marriage-feast of Cana in Galilee^o. Another time she is mentioned, together

^m Maldonat in loc.ⁿ Isa. xlii. 8.^o John ii. 1, &c.

with the brethren of our Saviour, as inquiring after Him^a. She is mentioned again^r, as standing by the cross of her Son, beholding His passion, and thereby fulfilling the prophecy of good old Simeon, that "a sword should pierce through her own soul^s." And, lastly, she is mentioned by St. Luke as present at that assembly of Christians, wherein Matthias was elected to the Apostleship in the room of Judas^t. In all which places, the mention of her is such, as may seem purposely designed to have prevented that superstitious and idolatrous worship of her, which was afterward set up in the Church of Rome.

In the rest of the writings of the New Testament, the Epistles of the Apostles, wherein they fully instruct us in all the essentials of that religion and worship which Christianity requires of us, she is not so much as once named; much less is there any the least intimation of any invocation or religious worship due to her from us.

It is a most ridiculous account which the Romanists give us of this silence of the Holy Scriptures. Lorinus, a very learned and approved writer among them, in his exposition of Acts i. 14, thus resolves the difficulty. "There are few things delivered concerning the mother of Christ in the Scriptures, because those things were sufficient which in her respected Christ; and also, because that one title of 'the mother of Christ and of God,' serves instead of all praises; and farther, because her testimony might be suspected by the unbelieving world: and, lastly, because as Adam was formed out of the unformed and thick earth, and then Eve out of his rib; so Christ was first to be preached, and the virtue of Christ to be made known in the rude earth of persecutions and Martyrs^u. Afterwards, the blessed Virgin was celebrated by many encomiums of the Fathers, and made illustrious by many miracles, temples, festivals," &c. Thus far he. But, 1. The Jesuit yields all that we desire, when he confesseth "that those things were sufficient

^a Matt. xii. 47, &c.

^r John xix. 25—27.

^s Luke ii. 35.

^t Acts i. 14. [It is not actually said that she was present at the election of

Matthias: compare v. 15. The Romanists say that she was present with the Apostles on the day of Pentecost.]

^u In rudi terra persecutionum et Martyrum.

to have been spoken concerning the blessed Virgin, which in her respected Christ." Nothing more certain. It was the setting forth Christ, not of His mother, which was the end and design of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures of the New Testament; and, therefore, that was sufficient to be spoken of her, which served to lead us to the knowledge of, and to faith in, Christ. 2. As for the title of "the mother of God," it doth not at all infer any right the blessed Virgin hath to our religious adoration of her. By that relation to the Son of God, she cannot challenge any share with Him in His divine honour; much less any commanding power over Him, which yet hath been formerly in the public offices of the Church of Rome^x, and I am certain, is still in some of their private offices, attributed to her^y. For though she was the mother of Him that was God, yet she contributed nothing to Him as God; but He, as such, was and is her God, Lord, Creator, and Saviour; to Whom therefore she, together with us, pays all humble adoration and worship. Nay, she was not His mother as man, in so strict a sense as other women are mothers of their children; for she conceived Him not naturally, but by the help of the Divine Spirit overshadowing her: so that her very conception of Him as man, was immediately due to Him as God; and she was eternally bound to praise Him, for so wonderful an operation wrought in her. And it is to be observed, that the ancient Doctors of the Church, when they contested with heretics about the title *θεοτόκος*, "mother of God," designed not by that title, so much to advance the honour of the blessed Virgin, as to secure the real and inseparable union of the two natures in Christ; and to shew, that the human nature, which Christ took of the holy Virgin, never subsisted separately from the divine Person of the Son of God. 3. His third reason of this silence, is plainly foolish and absurd, "that her testimony would have been suspected by the unbelieving world:" for by the same reason, the Scriptures must have been silent concerning Christ Himself also. Besides, the question is not of the Virgin

^x [Accedit ad illud aureum Divinæ Majestatis tribunal, non rogans, sed imperans, domina non ancilla. *Damianus.* perat ut mater. *Albertus Magnus, Bibl. Mariæ.*]

^y [Monstra te esse matrem. *Office of the Virgin.*]

Mary's testimony of herself, but of the testimony of the Apostles and sacred writers concerning her. Now, certainly, it highly concerned the world to understand how much the blessed Virgin could do with God and His Son, if "by her all grace be dispensed," as the Papists have affirmed. And the Apostles cannot escape the censure of gross negligence or great envy, if they knew of any such conveyance of grace, and yet would not vouchsafe to the world the least point of their finger towards it. 4. His fourth and last reason, is an impious speculation. For are Christ and the blessed Virgin joined together in the point of religious worship, as the male and female deity, as Adam and Eve were in their formation, with this only difference, that as Adam was first formed, and after Eve, so the Divine power of Christ was first proclaimed in the world, and afterward the blessed Virgin was celebrated and made illustrious? Besides, what a dirty comparison is that, whereby he resembles the primitive age, the age of Confessors and Martyrs, the best and most glorious age of the Church, to the thick and unformed earth and clay, out of which Adam was fashioned; and the after-ages to the more refined substance of Adam, out of which Eve was taken! What a dreadful infatuation must it be, that shall make men, of great sense and learning otherwise, thus to write and speak! Lastly, How plainly doth the Jesuit here again yield up the cause to us! He confesseth, that the knowledge of Christ alone, was at first preached in the days of persecution and martyrdom, and that the celebration of the blessed Virgin (such as is now practised in the Church of Rome) sprang up afterwards. A most certain truth; for there is not one tittle to be found in any genuine writer of the first three hundred years after Christ, (to go no farther,) that may give any the least countenance to the invocation of the blessed Virgin Mary, or of any other saint; but very many most express testimonies against it in all of them: and therefore, we are most certain, that the doctrine of the Church of Rome, concerning the invocation of the blessed Virgin, and the other saints, was none of the doctrines delivered by the holy Apostles to the Church of Christ. And for our part, we are content and fully satisfied with that knowledge of Christ alone, which was preached "in the rude earth of persecutions"

and Martyrs^z;" that is, in the best and most glorious ages of the Church: and we willingly leave those after-refined discoveries of the blessed Virgin's honour to the Papists, to follow and embrace them, seeing they will not be otherwise persuaded, at their own peril.

Before I conclude, I will mention some few instances of extravagant honour which the Papists give, but we of the Church of England utterly refuse to yield, to the blessed Virgin, out of a true zeal to the honour of God.

We will not give her lavish and excessive attributes, beyond what the Holy Scriptures allow her, and the holy men of the primitive Church afforded her. We will call her "blessed," as the mother of our Lord, in the sense above explained. But we dare not call her "queen of heaven," "queen of Angels, Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles," "source of the fountain of grace," "refuge of sinners," "comfort of the afflicted," "advocate of all Christians," as she is called in that Litany of our Lady, still used in their devotions. For we have no instance of such attributes given to the blessed Virgin in the Holy Scriptures, and they are too big for any mere creature.

We will not ascribe those excellencies to her, that she never had nor could have; as, a fulness of habitual grace, more grace than all the angels and archangels of God put together ever had; that she was born without original sin, and never committed any the least actual sin, and, consequently, never needed a Saviour. These are wild things, which very many of the Papists, drunk with superstition, say of her.

We will not give her the honour of invocation, or praying to her, as all the Papists do, for the unanswerable reasons above mentioned. Indeed, as long as that one text of Scripture remains in our Bibles, which we read, 1 Tim. ii. 5, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus;" we shall never be persuaded, by any sophistry or subtle distinctions of our adversaries, to betake ourselves to the mediation of the blessed Virgin, much less of any other saint.

Much more do we abhor the impiety of those among the Papists, who have held it disputable, whether the milk of the blessed Virgin or the blood of her Son be to be preferred; and

^z In rudi terra persecutionum et Martyrum.

at last could pitch upon no better resolution than this, that the milk and blood should be mixed together, and both compound a medicine for their souls.

We abhor to divide the divine kingdom and empire, giving one half, the better half, the kingdom of mercy, to the blessed Virgin, and leaving only the kingdom of justice to her Son. This is downright treason against the only universal King and Monarch of the world.

We are astonished at the doxology, which some great and learned men of the Church of Rome have not been ashamed to close their printed books with; *Laus Deo, Deiparæque Virgini*; "Praise be to God, and the Virgin-mother of God."

We should tremble every joint of us, to offer any such recommendation as this to the Virgin Mary. Hear, if you can without horror, a prayer of theirs to her. It is this:

"O my lady, holy Mary, I recommend myself into thy blessed trust and singular custody, and into the bosom of thy mercy, this night and evermore, and in the hour of my death, as also my soul and my body; and I yield unto thee all my hope and consolation, all my distress and misery, my life and the end thereof, that by thy most holy intercession, and by thy merits, all my works may be directed and disposed, according to thine and thy Son's will. Amen." What fuller expressions can we use to declare our absolute affianced, trust, and dependence on the eternal Son of God Himself, than they here use in this recommendation to the Virgin? Yea, who observes not, that the will of the blessed Virgin is expressly joined with the will of her Son, as the rule of our actions, and that so, as that her will is set in the first place. A plain smatch of their old blasphemous impiety, in advancing the mother above the Son, and giving her a commanding power over Him. Can they have the face to say, that all this is no more than desiring the blessed Virgin to pray for them, as we desire the prayers of one another on earth? And yet, this recommendation is to be seen in a Manual of Prayers and Litanies printed at Antwerp no longer ago than 1671, and that *permissu superiorum*, in the evening prayers for Friday. A book it is, to my knowledge commonly to be found in the hands of our English Papists; for I had it from a near relation of mine, (who had been per-

verted by the emissaries of Rome, but is since returned again to the communion of the Church of England,) who assured me, that she used it herself, by the direction of her Confessor, in her private devotions.

Lastly; We abominate the impious imposture of those, who have translated the most humble and holy Virgin into an idol of pride and vanity, and represented her as a vainglorious and aspiring creature; like Lucifer, (I tremble at the comparison,) thirsting after divine worship and honour, and seeking out superstitious men and women, whom she may oblige to her more especial service, and make them her perpetual votaries. For what greater affront than this, could they have offered to her humility and sanctity? How fulsome, yea, how perfectly loathsome to us, are the tales of those, that have had the assurance to tell us of the amorous addresses of the blessed Virgin to certain persons, her devout worshippers; choosing them for her husbands, bestowing her kisses liberally on them, giving them her breasts to suck, and presenting them with bracelets and rings of her hair, as love-tokens! The fables of the Jewish Talmudists, yea, of Mahomet, may seem grave, serious, and sober histories, compared to these and other such like impudent fictions. Insomuch, that wise men have thought that the authors of these romances in religion; were no better than the tools and instruments of Satan, used by him to expose the Christian religion, and render it ridiculous, and thereby to introduce atheism. And indeed we are sure, that the wits of Italy, where these abominable deceits have been and are chiefly countenanced, were the first broachers and patrons of infidelity and atheism in Europe, since the time that Christianity obtained in it.

In a word, such is the worship given to the blessed Virgin by many in the Church of Rome, that they deserve to be called *Mariani*, rather than *Christiani*, &c.

My brethren, let us bless God that we yet breathe in a pure air, free from the noisome and pestilent fogs of those superstitious vanities, where none of those fooleries and impieties are obtruded on our faith or practice; that we live in a Church, wherein no other name is invocated but the Name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; nor divine worship given to any but

to the one true God, through Jesus Christ, the only Mediator. O happy we, if we knew and valued our own happiness ! But alas ! alas ! many of us do not. We despise and trample upon that reformation of religion, which, by a miracle of God's mercy, was wrought in this nation in the days of our forefathers, and run to schismatical assemblies, under pretence of seeking after a better reformation. We abandon that Church, and can hardly forbear to call it Antichristian and Popish harlot ; the foundation-stones whereof were laid and cemented in the blood of God's holy Martyrs, that died in defiance of the errors and superstitions of the Romish synagogue. And yet these men call themselves Protestants, yea, the only true Protestants ; and will scarce allow us of the Church of England a share in the title. God grant, that by this our horrid ingratitude, we do not provoke Him to recal that mercy, which ourselves indeed throw back into His face, as if it were not worth our acceptance, and to cause a dark night of Popery to return on us ; wherein a superstitious and idolatrous worship shall be thrust upon us, yea, and we shall be compelled to forbidden and idolatrous worship, or to death ; wherein our Bibles, that we now not only with liberty but encouragement carry about us, shall be snatched out of our hands, and fabulous lying legends put in the room of them ; wherein our excellent Liturgy, in a tongue we all understand, which many of us now loathe, and call pitiful pottage, yea, and Popish Mass, shall be abolished, and the abominable Roman Mass indeed placed in its stead ; wherein the cup of blessing in the Holy Eucharist shall be sacrilegiously taken from us, which is now openly and freely held forth to us all, and that in so excellent a way of administration, that the whole Christian world beside is not able at this day to shew the like ; but we scorn to take it, and refuse to receive it, unless it be given us by an unhallowed hand in a factious conventicle. If ever these, and the other ill effects of Popery, which I cannot now mention, happen to us, (which God avert !) and I trust it will never come to pass ; but, I say, if ever these things should befall us, we should then, when it is too late, clearly distinguish between light and darkness, and discern the vast difference between the established religion, which many now call Popery, and Popery itself. We should then cast back a

kind and mournful eye upon our dear mother, the Church of England; whose very bowels we now tear and rip up, by our wicked schisms. We should then wish ourselves in the safe arms of her Communion once again, and resolve never more to depart from it. Let us do that now, whilst it is seasonable, which we shall then wish we had done, but cannot do.

But I return to my text, and shall, for a conclusion of my discourse on it, observe, that both it and the whole Magnificat, or song of the blessed Virgin, is applicable to, and may be made use of by, all true Christians. For,

I. The nature which the Son of God assumed of His virgin mother, is our common nature, which is by that assumption transcendently, to our own amazement and the admiration of angels, dignified and advanced. The eternal Word, by His incarnation, or being made flesh, intended not directly to honour the blessed Virgin in particular, but mankind in general. He intended thereby to declare us His brethren, by being made of the same flesh and blood that we are, as the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews assures us^b. "Forasmuch then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same." And^c, "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren." In a word, the Son of God, therefore, honoured the blessed Virgin so far, as in and from her to become man, that He might advance human nature, by assuming it into the unity of His divine Person; and that being born of her, He might procure, not only hers, but our common salvation. So that every one of us may sing the Magnificat, and bear a part in this divine anthem, and, *mutatis mutandis*, say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He hath regarded the low estate of us vile and mortal men, His poor servants and vassals. For behold, from henceforth, and upon the account of the incarnation of the Son of God, the whole creation, yea, the very angels themselves, shall and do proclaim us blessed. For He that is mighty hath magnified us in the highest degree, by uniting Himself to our nature, and therefore holy is, and for ever blessed be, His name." And therefore the holy Virgin, presently after my text, celebrates the mercy

^b Chap. ii. 14.

^c Ver. 17.

shewn to her, as common to all the sons of men in all ages, that do not, by their disobedience and ingratitude, render themselves utterly unworthy of it. "And His mercy is on them that fear Him, from generation to generation, or throughout all generations^d."

Wherefore, most lamentable is the ignorance and folly of our dissenters, who despise the use of this excellent song in the daily service of our Church, as unedifying, as impertinent, and not belonging to them, and proper only to the blessed Virgin, and therefore refuse to stand up and bear a part in the rehearsal of it. Certainly they are very ill taught and instructed, who understand not that all Christians may and ought most heartily to join in this divine hymn. For,

II. The blessedness of the holy Virgin is not so altogether proper to her, or incommunicable to others, but that the meanest sincere Christian may share with her in the better part of it. Wonderful and full of comfort are the words of our Saviour^e, where, when a certain woman, hearing His excellent discourse, cried out, "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked^f," our Saviour answers, "Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it^g." Which is not a negation of the blessedness of His mother, (for that would be a plain contradiction to my text,) but a correction of the woman's mistake, who so admired the blessedness of the mother of such a son, that she scarce thought of any other blessedness. Our Saviour therefore tells her, "that blessed are they also, yea, and chiefly, that hear the word of God, and keep it." And in another place, our gracious Lord, being told that His mother and brethren desired to speak with Him, gave this short answer, "Who is My mother? and who are My brethren? And He stretched forth His hands towards His Disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren! for whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother^h." Where, I think, there is a mighty emphasis in those words of our Saviour, "My Father which is in heaven;" as if He had said, You Jews think of Me

^d Ver. 50.

^e Luke xi.

^f Ver. 27.

^g Ver. 28.

^h Matt. xii. 48—50.

as a mere man, and understand not any other relation that I have, besides that which is according to the flesh : but know ye that I am of a higher original, even the eternal Son of the eternal God dwelling in heaven ; and, as such, I own no relation but what is spiritual, and every obedient disciple of Mine is to Me as a brother, or sister, or mother. Indeed, the Virgin herself was more blessed by conceiving Christ in her heart by faith, than by conceiving Him in her womb. And in this her chiefest blessedness, the meanest Christian, that is a sincere one, may be a sharer with her. Christ may be thus formed, nay, He must be so, in every one that shall be savedⁱ. And if we be true Christians, though all generations do not call us blessed, as the holy Virgin, yet together with her we shall be indeed blessed beyond all generations, even for ever and ever.

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be given and ascribed all honour and glory, all religious worship and adoration, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

ⁱ Gal. iv. 19.

SERMON V.

ST. PAUL'S THORN IN THE FLESH, THE MESSENGER OF SATAN, SENT TO PREVENT HIS BEING EXALTED ABOVE MEASURE, CONSIDERED AND EXPLAINED; WITH SEVERAL PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS DRAWN FROM THAT SUBJECT.

2 COR. xii. 7—9.

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

ST. PAUL, of all the Apostles of Christ, met with the greatest opposition and contempt from the false Judaizing apostles, that troubled the Church in his time. The true reason whereof was, that he first of all openly and every where proclaimed and preached the utter abolition of the Mosaic law, both as to Jews and Gentiles. But the pretence seems to be this, that he was none of the twelve Apostles, called by Christ Himself when on earth; nor afterwards duly elected an Apostle in the room of any of that number, as Matthias was: but an odd thirteenth Apostle, thrusting himself into that sacred office, they knew not how, or by what authority. For the relation of Christ's glorious appearance to him from heaven, and sending him to preach His Gospel among the Gentiles, (which indeed was a higher call than any of the other Apostles had,) doubtless they rejected as a mere fiction; though the visible effect of that ap-

partition, his strange and sudden alteration and change from a violent persecutor, to be a preacher of the Gospel, yea, and willingly to be persecuted for it, was of itself sufficient to convince all sober and unprejudiced persons of the certain truth of it.

Against these calumniators, he strenuously vindicates his divine mission and authority in the two preceding, in this, and in the following chapters. In pursuance of which design, he is constrained to do that, which, in itself, and prescinded from the circumstances he was in, had been sin and folly; that is, to commend himself. And he excellently and fully demonstrates, that he was not in any respect inferior to the very chiefest of the Apostles; neither in his sufferings, nor in his miracles, nor in his generous charity and unwearied diligence in the discharge of his office, nor in the success of it; nay, that in the three things last mentioned, he exceeded all the other Apostles; nor in the point of revelations made known to him.

And upon this last head he insists in the beginning of this chapter, out of which my text is taken; where he speaks of admirable visions and revelations he had received from God at several times, once in the "third" or "highest heaven," and another time in "paradise^a." The *ὑπερβολή*, the "exceeding greatness," or excellency of these revelations, he declares to be such, that he was in danger by them to be transported beyond the bounds of sobriety and modesty, into pride and vanity, had not God, in His wisdom and goodness, by a very severe discipline on his flesh or body, prevented that undue elation of his mind. Which discipline, he farther shews, the gracious God thought necessary, for the same reason, still to continue on him, notwithstanding his earnest repeated and reiterated prayers and supplications for the removal of it; only assuring him, that His grace should be sufficient for him, and that His strength should be made perfect in that weakness of his; and that thereupon he fully acquiesced in the good-will and pleasure of God, yea, and rejoiced and gloried in that sharp chastisement. "And lest I should be exalted above measure," &c.

For the understanding of which text, we are to inquire

^a Ver. 2—4.

into these three things. I. What is meant in those words of St. Paul, "lest I should be exalted above measure." II. What we are to understand by the "thorn in the flesh." III. What by "the messenger of Satan, sent to buffet the Apostle."

I. Let us inquire what is meant in those words of St. Paul, "lest I should be exalted above measure;" for that is questioned by some. Photius, in *Œcumenius*, understands the words, not of St. Paul's being over much exalted in his own conceit, but of his being too much extolled in the esteem and praises of others. And *Theophylact* also mentions the same interpretation, though he himself utterly dislikes it. Indeed, the Greek will bear it well enough; for *ἵνα μὴ ὑπεραίρωμαι*, may not unfitly be translated, "lest I should be too much extolled," that is, magnified by others. And of this He expressly speaks in the verse immediately preceding, "lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be." And it seems a very good and pious design to endeavour to excuse the excellent Apostle from so shameful an infirmity, as a propension to pride. But yet this interpretation is by no means to be admitted. For, 1. All the most ancient Doctors of the Church, with one consent, understand the words as we do, of St. Paul's being in danger to be too much lifted up in his own conceit. So *Irenæus*, in his fifth book^b, tells us, that the words of the Apostle here signify "being lifted up to fall from the truth^c;" and "to be exalted against God, and presumptuously to assume glory to one's self^d." And so all the rest of the Fathers, who are herein followed by a full stream of modern interpreters. And to oppose so general a consent would savour something of that sin of pride in ourselves, which we endeavour to excuse St. Paul from a propension to. 2. It is not so reasonable to conceive, that St. Paul should be so severely afflicted, and thus buffeted, to prevent the sin of others, as that he should suffer so much to prevent or cure a sin of his own. 3. The exaltation spoken of in the text, is plainly expressed as an effect likely to have immediately happened from those visions and revelations, which St. Paul received in secret, and which were not known to

^b Chap. 3.

^c Elatum excidere a veritate.

^d Extolli adversus Deum, et presumptionem suæ gloriæ assumere.

others, till he thus declared them. The danger therefore he speaks of, was to himself, and not to others. 4. As for the context, if it be more closely considered, it doth not necessarily confirm the other interpretation. For of the connection of my text with what went before, a clear account may be given without it. For the Apostle having said, he would forbear to insist on his revelations, lest, if he should set them forth to the full, other men might be tempted to think too highly of him; he proceeds in the text to shew, that the revelations were indeed so great and excellent, that he himself, after he had received them, was in danger of being transported into pride, if God had not administered an effectual remedy to prevent that distemper of his mind. Besides, having said^c, that he would rather “glory in his infirmities,” than in his revelations; in the text he accordingly speaks of those infirmities, and that as they were on purpose inflicted on him by God, to keep him from glorying too much in the revelations he had received. Lastly; Though St. Paul were an excellent Apostle, yet he was still but a man, and a man on earth, not yet in heaven, a *viator* not a *comprehensor*; a proficient, not yet fully perfect, or so immutably confirmed in virtue, as to be out of all danger of the sin of pride, which even the angels of heaven fell into. Hence Theophylact having thus paraphrased the words of St. Paul, “lest I should be vainglorious^f” presently subjoins, “for St. Paul himself also was a man^g.” The commonly received interpretation, therefore, here is undoubtedly the truest.

II. Our second inquiry is, what is meant by the “thorn in the flesh.” The Greek word *σκόλοψ*, signifies *quicquid acuminatum est*, “any thing that is sharp-pointed,” as a goad, or stake, or arrow, or thorn, or the like; which being fixed in the flesh or body, is very painful and troublesome. It is a metaphor; and what the thing is St. Paul intended by it, is the great question. I shall set before you the several interpretations of expositors, rejecting those which I have evident reasons to conclude false, and establishing that which I think to be the true one.

^c Ver. 5.

^f “ἵνα μὴ κενοδοξῶ.

^g Ὁ ἄνθρωπος γὰρ ἦν καὶ αὐτός.

First; Some^h by the “thorn in the flesh” understand “those troubles, afflictions, and persecutions, which St. Paul suffered, and wherewith he was continually molested in the preaching of the Gospel.” But I do not think this to be the meaning of the Apostle, for these reasons. 1. The “thorn in the flesh” he speaks of, seems to be some trouble more peculiar to himself, and adapted to his particular circumstances; whereas troubles and persecutions for the sake of the Gospel, were common to him with all the rest of the Apostles; and yet we hear not a word of any “thorn in the flesh” given to any of them. 2. Troubles and persecutions for the Gospel, are too general a thing to agree to the expressions in the text, which are more particular, and plainly denote some special trouble or evil, wherewith St. Paul was exercised. For it is said in the singular number, “a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan.” To evade which argument, some have answered, that here is meant some one particular and more notable adversary of the Apostle, that continually set himself to oppose and persecute him, as Alexander the coppersmith, or the like. But it were vain to conceive, that either Alexander the coppersmith, or any other adversary of St. Paul, should continually dog him at the heels whithersoever he went, and be a perpetual vexation to him, as the thorn he speaks of was. Besides, the thorn is said to have its seat in the flesh or body of St. Paul, and therefore was some inherent grief in himself, and not any external trouble from without. 3. The “thorn in the flesh” St. Paul speaks of, was not given him till after his being caught up into the third heaven, and into paradise; whereas St. Paul's troubles and persecutions for the Gospel's sake commenced from his very first giving up his name to Christ. 4. It became not St. Paul to pray so earnestly and so often, to have his persecutions removed from him, who could not but know, that they were his allotted portion, bequeathed to him in his very first conversionⁱ, yea, and that all who should then live godly in Jesus Christ were of necessity “to suffer persecution^k.” The chiefest colour for this interpretation is, that St. Paul doth indeed presently after make mention also of

^h [Erasmus, after Chrysostom and Ambrose.]

ⁱ Acts ix. 16.

^k 2 Tim. iii. 12.

his persecutions and distresses for the Gospel's sakeⁱ. But of this I shall give a very clear and satisfactory account afterwards in this Discourse.

Secondly, Some by the "thorn in the flesh" understand *uredinem libidinis*, which I am ashamed to translate. Yet it being a very common exposition, it will be necessary to shew the great absurdity and folly of it. 1. This interpretation contradicts the plain and express profession of St. Paul concerning himself, that he had the gift of continence, and that in so eminent a degree, that he wished all Christians were in this like himself^k. 2. If this had been the "thorn in the flesh" St. Paul was troubled with, he had a remedy at hand; the same he proposed to others, and which he tells us he might himself have made use of as well as some other of the Apostles, if he had seen occasion for it; viz. honest and honourable matrimony^l. 3. St. Paul, when he wrote this Epistle was, by the computation of chronologers, about sixty years old: and it is a foul slur to so great and holy an Apostle to imagine, that he should burn in that frozen age, which useth to extinguish, or at least to allay, those flames in the most unclean persons. 4. If this had been St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh," he could not without blasphemy have said of it, *ἐδόθη μοι*, "it was given me," viz. by God, the same gracious God, Who in giving it intended to keep me from being undone by pride. The sparks of lust issue from hell, and lead also to those unquenchable flames. 5. If this had been the "thorn in the flesh," St. Paul would have prayed for the removal of it, not only thrice, but a thousand times; yea, he would never have given over, till by an unwearied importunity, he had obtained his desire; and the most holy God would not, could not, have denied him so just and holy a request. Lastly, St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh," was something, wherewith, when he was denied the removal of it, he not only rested contented, but even "gloried in it^m." Now it had been the greatest impiety in him to have gloried in his impure motions and desires. And this same reason equally overthrows all those other interpretations that expound the text of any

ⁱ Ver. 10.^k 1 Cor. vii. 7.^l 1 Cor. vii. 9; ix. 5.^m Ver. 9.

other sinful affection or infirmity in St. Paul. But let us proceed.

Thirdly, Others by the "thorn in the flesh" understand original sin, or the relics of it in St. Paul. But this interpretation likewise, we may boldly pronounce absurd, not only for the reason last mentioned, but upon other accounts also. For, 1. original sin was not given to St. Paul by God: nor, 2. was it given after his rapture into the third heaven, and into paradise; but it was, howsoever you define it, born with him.

Fourthly, Some there are that by the "thorn in the flesh," understand solicitations to pride. But this is the most senseless interpretation of all. For besides that, 1. this could not be said to be given by God; nor, 2. could it be called "a thorn in the flesh," pride being a vice seated in the mind; 3. this interpretation implies a manifest contradiction. For pride was the disease to be cured in St. Paul, and therefore could not be itself the cure or remedy.

Fifthly and lastly, Others expound the "thorn in the flesh" of some bodily disease in St. Paul, extraordinary painful and troublesome to him; which he aptly calls "a thorn," for its sharpness and pungency; and "a thorn in" his "flesh," for the seat of it, which was his body. This is the consentient interpretation of the most ancient Doctors of the Church, who have happened to make mention of this text. And they are the most likely men to have understood the history of St. Paul, and what (at least extraordinarily) happened to him. Irenæus, in his fifth bookⁿ, cites my text, and expressly expounds the "thorn in the flesh," of some bodily infirmity of the Apostle, such as might shew him to be a mortal man. For after he had alleged my text, he thus glosseth upon it. "What therefore, (may some say,) would the Lord then have His Apostle so buffeted, and to undergo such an infirmity? Yea, saith the Word: for strength is perfected in weakness. For how could man have learnt, that he himself is infirm, and by nature mortal, and God immortal and powerful, unless he had experimented what is in both?" that is, both the infirmity of man, and the power of

ⁿ Chap. 3.

o Quid ergo? (dicet enim aliquis) voluit ergo Dominus Apostolum suum sic colaphizari, et talem sustinere infir-

mitatem? Etiam, dicit verbum; virtus enim in infirmitate perficitur. Quemadmodum enim didicisset homo quoniam ipse quidem infirmus et natura

God. And he applies this to the error of those "who look upon the infirmity of the flesh or body of man, but do not consider the power of Him who raiseth it from the dead^p." Tertullian, in his book *De Pudicitia*^q, speaking of St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh," and his being buffeted, adds, "by a pain, as they say, in his ear or head^r." Where it is observable, that he delivers this, not as his own conceit, but as a received tradition in his time. St. Cyprian, in his book *De Mortalitate*, understands St. Paul's "thorn in the flesh" to be "many and grievous torments of his flesh and body^s." And St. Jerome also, in his notes upon Gal. iv. 13, assures us, that this was the ancient tradition. "They report," saith he, "that he often suffered a most grievous pain in his head, and that this was the messenger of Satan given him to buffet him^t." I will not determine what particular sickness or infirmity of body, St. Paul was troubled with; whether a violent headache, which, as you have seen, was the ancient tradition; or the cholic, as Aquinas upon the place tells us some thought; or the falling sickness, as others have imagined; (a fit disease indeed to cure an aspiring pride;) but it seems plain and evident to me, that some bodily sickness or infirmity it was. For,

1. In the answer of God to St. Paul's prayers for the removal of "his thorn in the flesh," it is expressly said, "For My strength is made perfect in weakness^u." Where it is known the Greek word *ἀσθένεια*, literally and most properly signifies "infirmity or weakness of body." And why we should here depart from the propriety of the word, I understand not. It is true, in the next verse, after the mention of infirmity, it presently follows, "in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake." But this is not added exegetically, or by way of exposition, but by accumulation: as if he had said, This my bodily infirmity, though attended with

mortalis, Deus autem immortalis et potens, nisi id quod est in utroque didicisset experimento?

^p Qui infirmitatem intuentur carnis, virtutem autem ejus qui suseitat eam a mortuis non contemplantur.

^q C. 13.

^r Per dolorem, ut aiunt, auriculæ vel capitis.

^s Carnis et corporis multa et gravia tormenta.

^t Tradunt eum gravissimum capitis dolorem sæpe perpressum, et hunc esse Satanæ angelum, qui appositus ei fuerit, ut ipsum colaphizaret.

^u Ἡ γὰρ δύναμις μου ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ τελειοῦται.

many other grievous and sharp afflictions and persecutions, I bear by the grace of God, yea, and take pleasure in it and them. And accordingly St. Cyprian, occasionally discoursing on the text, in the place but now cited, joins St. Paul's "many and grievous torments of body^x" with his other calamities, with his sufferings and persecutions.

2. St. Paul himself plainly enough confirms this interpretation of the ancients. "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the Gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus^y." There is little doubt to be made, but that St. Paul's "thorn in his flesh^z," and his "temptation in his flesh^a," are one and the same thing. Now "his temptation in his flesh," he expressly here expounds to be "an infirmity of his flesh^b," or body. And it is observable, that he speaks of such an "infirmity of his flesh," as was notorious, open, and visible to the Galatians, and therefore such as, if they had not looked any farther than his flesh or body, they might have despised him for. This one consideration, closely attended to, utterly overthrows all the other interpretations, and confirms the last exposition of the ancient Doctors, which I follow.

St. Paul's "thorn in his flesh," or "his temptation in his flesh," could not be any inward motion of original sin, or irritation to uncleanness, or suggestion of pride, it being something outward and apparent to the Galatians. Nor could it be his sufferings and persecutions for the Gospel's sake. For these all of them could not, without a very great impropriety, be called the "infirmity of his flesh," or body. Nor could they with any colour of reason make him despicable in the eyes of the Galatians, but rather, on the contrary, they must needs render him more honourable and glorious; when at the same time they saw the preacher of the Gospel to them, a stout and courageous confessor for that Gospel which he preached. Nor could this "thorn" and "temptation in his flesh" be any secret assaults of Satan upon his body or mind, (as some from the

^x Corporis multa et gravia tormenta.

^y Gal. iv. 13, 14.

^z Σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί.

^a Ὁ πειρασμός ἐν τῇ σαρκί.

^b Ἀσθενεῖαν τῆς σαρκός.

appellation given it, "the messenger of Satan," have collected,) for these were not visible to the Galatians or others. It remains, therefore, that it was some extraordinary bodily infirmity of St. Paul that he carried about him, which might have rendered him despicable in the eyes of the Galatians and others, to whom he preached the Gospel, if they had not at the same time seen the power of God appearing in the miracles he wrought, and in the excellency of his doctrine, and in his other virtues. And it is very probable, that the infirmity of his body, which thus continually haunted him, was interpreted by his malicious adversaries to be a judgment of God upon him.

Lastly, St. Paul himself again elsewhere informs us, that he was generally despised by the adversaries of his preaching, upon the account of some notable bodily weakness or infirmity of his. For he represents the false apostles as thus objecting against him. "His letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible^c." Where it is in the Greck, his bodily presence is ἀσθενής, infirm, weak, or sickly, and his speech contemptible; as there are many bodily diseases that have a great influence on the speech, and render it less grateful and acceptable. And the same bodily infirmity, he in divers other places mentions, as the great disadvantage which he laboured under in the preaching of the Gospel. See especially 1 Cor. ii. 3. "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." And 2 Cor. xiii. 3, 5, 9. "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection." By all which it seems to me very plain, that St. Paul had some notorious visible infirmity in his body, that might expose him to contempt with those, who looked no farther than the outward appearance, and was designed by God as a means to keep him humble. He was a weak, sickly Apostle; and therefore despicable to many. In this also like his genuine son Timothy, to whom he gives this advice, "^dDrink no longer water, but

^c 2 Cor. x. 10.^d 1 Tim. v. 23.

drink a little wine, for thy stomach's sake, and for thy often infirmities^e." There was this difference between the infirmity of the one and the other, that St. Paul's was extraordinary and supernatural; but Timothy's an effect of his natural constitution. Which brings me to the third inquiry.

In the third and last place, therefore, we are to inquire, what St. Paul means by "the messenger of Satan." And here it is agreed by the generality of interpreters, that this signifies the same thing with the former, viz. the "thorn in the flesh." And indeed in the Greek, as well as in our translation, there is no conjunction, but a plain apposition; it is not said, "a thorn in the flesh and a messenger of Satan;" but "a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan." Now we have evidently shewn, that St. Paul's "thorn in his flesh" was some troublesome disease in his body. It remains, therefore, that we inquire, why this bodily disease is called ἀγγελος Σατάν, "the messenger of Satan." The learned Grotius here answers in short, because it was "a disease^f," by God's permission and appointment, "sent or inflicted on him by Satan." And I doubt not but he is in the right. For it was an ancient opinion of the Jews, that many diseases are without natural causes, inflicted on men by evil angels. Nor is it any wonder that Satan should have such a power, by God's permission, over the bodies of the best of men, to him that reads the history of Job, the most perfect man of his age. "And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold he is in thy hand, but save his life. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown^g." But there is a text also in the New Testament, that plainly warrants this exposition. We read^h of a woman, who had "a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years together," an extraordinary infirmity, whereby her body was doubled, and so bowed together, that in all that time she could in no wise lift up herself.

That this was a supernatural affliction is plain from the words of our Saviourⁱ. "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo these

^e Καὶ διὰ τὰς πυκνὰς σου ἀσθενείας.

^f Morbus a Satana immissus.

^g Job ii. 6, 7.

^h Luke xiii. 11.

ⁱ Verse 16.

eighteen years, be loosed from this bond?" Here we have a bodily infirmity continuing upon a daughter of Abraham for eighteen years together, and this infirmity attributed to the power (permitted him by God) of Satan. And my text tells us of one of the most excellent sons of Abraham, continually vexed with a bodily infirmity, and that the "messenger of Satan." The good woman was in her infirmity bound by Satan for eighteen years: St. Paul in his infirmity was buffeted by Satan (as it is very probable) to the end of his life.

And so much for the explanation of my text; wherein I have been of necessity so large, that I have little time left me for the handling of the useful observations that may be drawn from it. But indeed such a text thoroughly opened, yields of itself profitable matter enough to entertain the intelligent hearer, that knows how to improve it. Yet for the help of the weaker sort, give me leave to point out some observations that naturally flow from the text thus explained.

Observ. 1. The best of men, those that excel in the gifts and graces of God, are liable to the worst of vices; viz. pride.

Mr. Calvin's note on my text is very apposite; "^kLet us diligently consider who it is that here speaks. A man that had conquered infinite dangers, torments, and other evils; that had triumphed over all the enemies of Christ; that had shook off the fear of death; and, lastly, had renounced the world; and yet this man had not as yet wholly subdued his inclinations to pride: nay, he was still engaged in so doubtful a combat with it, that he could not conquer without being himself beaten and buffeted." Pride, as it was the first sin of man, so it is his last too; and is therefore not unfitly called by one *indusium animæ*, the vice that sticks most closely to us, and the last we shall put off and be rid of.

Other vices are found only in evil actions, but this ariseth out of our best works. Nay, this sin oftentimes springs out of its contrary virtue, and a man is apt to be proud of his own humility; and the humble man, as soon as he knows his own humility, is in danger of losing it.

When a man hath arrived to the top of all virtue, he is not out of all danger of this vice; nay, he is then in most

^k Consideremus diligenter quis hic loquatur, &c.

danger of it. "It is a rare thing to excel many, and to despise none¹." It is a hard matter for a man to be cried up for an eminent saint, and an excellent person, and not to let in through his ears into his soul the infection of pride and vanity. Few men have such steady heads as to be able to stand upon the spires and pinnacles of glory without giddiness.

It was the sin of pride, as Divines generally believe, that ruined a multitude of the angelic host. Those once most glorious spirits, walking upon the battlements of heaven, grew dizzy with their own greatness, and fell down into a state of utter darkness and extreme misery. Upon whose fall, one observes, that pride is a vice highly descended, and commonly entailed on the most highborn and excellent minds; because it was first born in heaven, and conceived in the womb of an angel's mind. Let us, therefore, (being taught by these examples,) so war with all other lusts and vices, as to bend our chiefest force against this sin of pride; and when we have done our best, we shall find the conquest difficult enough.

But are the best of saints, the most excellent persons, only subject to this worst of vices? No, certainly; for pride is nothing else but an overweening opinion of a man's own excellence; and such an opinion they may and often do entertain, who have no real excellence in themselves. The beggar may dream that he is a king, and the fool may entertain himself in his paradise, though it be a mere creature of his own foolish fancy. Yea, there are some, who are proud by a kind of creation, that is, proud of nothing. But how intolerable, how utterly inexcusable, is this kind of pride! That such a man as St. Paul, the great thaumaturgus, or wonder-worker, the most learned and laborious of all the Apostles, the doctor of the Gentiles, the man of the highest revelations, the guest of paradise and of the third heaven, in both which he was entertained with the discovery of unutterable mysteries; that such a man as this should be tempted to pride is not so wonderful, though in him pride would have been a grievous sin. How insufferable then is their pride, who come infinitely short of any such excellencies, and yet are actually as proud as St. Paul was only in danger to be! What a prodigy of pride is

¹ *Rarum est multis præeminere et neminem despiciere.*

he, that thinks himself to be something (yea, and μέγας τις, "some great one too") when he is nothing! as St. Paul expresseth it^m.

If it would have been a fault in that great Apostle to have been lifted up in his own conceit, though advanced by God to so very high a perfection of science and sanctity; what a crime is it in us to be exalted by self-opinion, who indeed creep in the dust, and have so little or nothing, either of intellectual or moral endowments, to pride ourselves in, who know so little, and practise much less!

What a sad sight is it, to behold a young novice, having read a dry system in theology, and attained to some remembrance of the common objections and solutions therein, strutting as if he had already reached the very top of that lofty and sublime science, and were become the most consummate and complete Divine!

But how much more lamentable an object is the ignorant and illiterate mechanic; who, because his memory serves him to quote a great many texts of Scripture, and that by chapter and verse, (though the sense of the tenth part of them at least he is far from understanding,) and to repeat after a sorry fashion some sermons he hath heard, thinks himself wiser than those very teachers, to whom he owes all his little scraps and fragments of knowledge, and sufficiently qualified for a critic, and judge of sermons and orthodoxy; and, consequently, undertakes to be a teacher himself, and perhaps sets up for the master of a new sect, and prefers his own small wisdom before the wisdom of the whole Church wherein he lives, and dares tax the most deliberate and advised sanctions and constitutions of the learned and holy Fathers of it, of imprudence and folly, yea, and impiety too! I am sick of these men; and therefore, beseeching God to give them a righter understanding of themselves, I leave them, and proceed to my second observation.

Observ. 2. Pride is so dangerous a disease and vice of the soul, that God thinks fit to prevent or cure it in His servants, by the sharpest and severest remedies.

St. Paul shall have "a thorn in his flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him," rather than be lifted up "above measure:" that he might not fall into the devil's sin, God permits him

^m Gal. vi. 3.

to fall under the devil's scourge; and he that could by his Apostolic authority deliver up others, is himself in a manner delivered up to Satan. It must be a desperate disease that requires so desperate a remedy.

The man inclined to pride must, *perire, ne pereat*, "be undone, that he may not be undone;" that is, he must be undone by some grievous affliction and calamity in this world, that he may not be undone for ever in the other.

But let us learn humility at a cheaper rate, endeavouring of ourselves to be humble, before we are humbled by God, and not forcing our gracious Lord to use His sharper medicines for the cure of our pride. Let us watch every thought of vanity that ariseth in our minds, and presently suppress it, as a spark of fire, that may be kindled into a devouring flame. Let us fix our thoughts on the worst of ourselves, and the best of us shall find matter enough there to keep us humble.

Observ. 3. The gift of miracles, and particularly the gift of curing diseases without natural medicine, was so given by Christ to His Apostles, as not to be at their own absolute disposal, but to be dispensed by them as the Giver should think fit.

This is no loose or far-fetched collection from my text, but such as upon a little consideration, offers itself to every man. St. Paul was as great a worker of wonders as any of the chiefest Apostles: he could, and did frequently, cure all manner of the most incurable diseases where he preached the Gospel, yea, and raised the dead to life; and yet he could not rid himself of that "thorn in the flesh," that painful disease, which Satan, by God's permission, had inflicted on him. What account can be given of this, but that which we have already given in the observation mentioned, that The gift of miracles, &c.? Upon the same account it was, that the same St. Paul cured not his dearly beloved son Timothy of his bad stomach or digestion, and the many ill effects consequent thereon, but wrote to him rather as a physician than an apostle, advising him, in the place above mentionedⁿ, to "drink no longer water, but to drink a little wine for his stomach's sake, and for his often infirmities;" that is, by this means to palliate and alleviate those infirmities which God thought fit to continue on him; though by His Apostles,

ⁿ 1 Tim. v. 23.

and by Himself, He totally removed other more incurable diseases and distempers from those to whom the Gospel was preached, as occasion required. Hereby it appeared, that the gift of curing diseases, without the help of art or nature, was indeed a gift, and a gift of God, and so given by Him to His Apostles, that they could not exercise it arbitrarily, and at their own pleasure, but only to whom, when, where, and how, God pleased, and should direct them to make use of that power: that so the glory of all the wonderful cures wrought by them, might at last redound to God the Author, and not to man the instrument.

And (by the way) perhaps this is the best account that can be given of the relic and remainder of the primitive miraculous gift of healing, for some hundreds of years past, visible in this our nation, and annexed to the succession of our Christian kings: I mean the cure of that otherwise generally incurable disease, called *morbus regius*, or the king's evil. That divers persons desperately labouring under it have been cured by the mere touch of the royal hand, assisted with the prayers of the Priests of our Church attending, is unquestionable, unless the faith of all our ancient writers, and the consentient report of hundreds of most credible persons in our own age, attesting the same, be to be questioned°. And yet, they say some of those diseased persons return from that sovereign remedy *re infecta*, without any cure done upon them. How comes this to pass? God hath not given this "gift of healing" so absolutely to our royal line, but that He still keeps the reins of it in His own hand, to let them loose, or restrain them, as He pleaseth. But I go forward.

Observ. 4. God doth sometimes lay very severe bodily and outward afflictions on the best of His servants.

St. Paul himself had his "thorn in the flesh," a painful disease and sickness, ever and anon molesting him. And is any of us better than that blessed Apostle? But I must not dwell on this.

Observ. 5. Good men, when they pray for the removal of outward evils, are not always heard, God purposing to continue the affliction on them for their spiritual good.

° See especially Bradwardine *D. Causa Dei*, l. 1. c. 1. coroll. par. 32, p. 59.

St. Paul prayed earnestly and frequently for the removal of that "thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan," sent him by God to prevent his being lifted up "above measure," and yet was not heard. And yet he was heard too, God promising a sufficient grace to support him under the affliction which lay upon him. Which brings me to my last observation.

Observ. 6. When God sees it for our good to continue any bodily or outward affliction on us, we must submit to His will, and comfort ourselves with the assurance of His sufficient grace, and His strength to be made perfect in our weakness.

This is the plain sense of the ninth verse, where the oracle of God immediately delivered to St. Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness," is really spoken through St. Paul to all that are in the same or the like circumstances with him.

Perhaps it is the case of some of us, that we labour under some painful or troublesome infirmity of body, or else are pressed with some other grievous outward affliction, which we have used all means within our power to be rid of, and often with earnestness prayed unto God to be delivered from, and yet still remain under the same calamity. If this be our case, let us not be dismayed or cast down, but remember that the great Apostle's condition was much the same with ours. And provided we be true and faithful servants of God, as St. Paul was, (though not in so eminent a degree as he,) let us, I say, be assured that the words of God in my text, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness," are as certainly spoken to every one of us as ever they were to him. And indeed there is a general promise of God, of the same import, delivered by the same Apostle to all true Christians; "God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it^p." Wherefore, let us comfort one another with these words.

And let us consider farther, that our life here is but short, and consequently that no trouble attending it can be long. We may say of every affliction, "It is but a little cloud that will soon pass away, vanish, and be gone^q." Trust in God, faith-

^p 1 Cor. x. 13.

^q Nubecula est cito transitura.

fully serve Him, and be patient; "yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry^r." The Lord our Redeemer is at hand, and His harbinger, Death, by hasty paces marcheth towards us; a messenger that ought in reason to be most welcome to all afflicted persons, who, by faith and a good life, or at least by a timely and true repentance for a bad one, are prepared to meet and receive Him. This physician will infallibly cure all our maladies and distempers, and put a final period to all our troubles and afflictions. This will pass us into a state of perfect rest and peace, in which there shall be no more sickness or sorrow, because no more sin. Yea, this will lead us into that Presence, and to that right hand of God, where there "is fulness of joy," and where "there are pleasures for evermore^s."

For which blessed estate, God of His infinite mercy fit us, and thereinto in His due time admit us all, through Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour.

To Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

^r Heb. x. 37.

^s Psalm xvi. 11.

SERMON VI.^a

A VISITATION SERMON, CONCERNING THE GREAT DIFFICULTY AND
DANGER OF THE PRIESTLY OFFICE.

JAMES iii. 1.

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

THE text may at first sight appear to some to stand at a very wide distance from the present occasion. But I hope, by that time I have spent a little pains in explaining it, I shall set the text and occasion at a perfect agreement.

The words, therefore, are by interpreters diversly expounded. Among the rest, two interpretations there are which stand as the fairest candidates for our reception.

1. Some understand the “masters” here in my text, to be proud, malicious censors, and judges of other men’s actions, and so expound the text as a prohibition of rash and uncharitable judgment, and make it parallel to that of our Saviour, “Judge not, that ye be not judged^d.” Be not rash and hasty in censuring or judging the actions of others, or speaking evil of them, considering that by so doing you will but procure a greater judgment of God upon yourselves. The chief, if not the only argument for this interpretation, is the context of the Apostle’s discourse, which in the following verses is wholly spent against the vices of the tongue. But,

^a [Published in London, 1714, together with his Charge to his Dioecese, and his Circular Letter to the Clergy. The title-page was, A Companion for the Candidates of Holy Orders; or, The Great Importance and Principal Duties of the Priestly Office. This Sermon

was evidently written many years before; and Nelson tells us, (Life, p. 401,) that the Bishop told his son on the night but one before he died, to strike out the preface, as *too juvenile*.]

^b Matt. vii. 1.

2. Others there are who interpret the “masters” in the text to be pastors or teachers in the Church of God; and, accordingly, understand the words as a serious caution against the rash undertaking of the Pastoral office or function, as an office attended with great difficulty and danger, a task very hard to be discharged, and wherein, whoever miscarries, makes himself thereby liable to a severer judgment of Almighty God.

This latter interpretation (with submission I speak it) seems to me, almost beyond doubt, the genuine sense of the Apostle. The reasons are evident in the text itself. For, 1. Unless we thus expound the words, it will be hard to give a rational account of this word πολλοὶ, “many,” why it should be inserted. For if we understand those masters the Apostle speaks of, to be rash judges and censurers of others, it is most certain then, one such would be too many, and the multiplicity of them would not be the only culpable thing. But, on the other side, if we receive the latter interpretation, the account of the word πολλοὶ is easily rendered, according to the paraphrase of Erasmus, thus; “Let not pastors or teachers be too vulgar and cheap among you; let not every man rush into so sacred an office and function^c.” And Drusius’s gloss on this very word is remarkable: *Summa summarum; quo pauciores sunt magistri, eo melius agitur cum populo. Nam ut medicorum olim Cariam, ita doctorum et magistrorum nunc multitudo perdit rempublicam. Utinam vanus sim.* I need not English the words to those whom they concern.

2. If we embrace any other interpretation, we must of necessity depart from the manifest propriety of the Greek word, which our translators render “masters.” The word is διδάσκαλοι, which whoso understands the first elements of the Greek tongue, know to be derived from διδάσκω, “to teach,” and so literally to signify “teachers.” “Be not many teachers.”

And so, accordingly, the Syriac renders it by a word which the learned Drusius tells us is parallel to the Hebrew מורים, which undoubtedly signifies “doctors” or “teachers.”

These reasons are sufficient to justify our interpretation, though I might add the authority of the ancients, who gene-

^c Ne passim ambiatis esse magistri.

rally follow this sense, as also the concurrent judgment of our most learned modern annotators, Erasmus, Vatablus, Castalio, Estius, Drusius, Grotius, with many others.

As for the connection of the words thus explained, with the following discourse of the Apostle, I suppose this very easy account may be given of it. The moderation and government of the tongue, (on which St. James, in the sequel of the chapter, wholly insists,) though it be a general duty, (for there is no man's tongue so lawless as to be exempted from the dominion of right reason and religion,) yet it is a duty wherein the pastor or teacher hath a peculiar concern. The Minister's tongue is a chief tool and instrument of his profession, that which, *ex officio*, he must often make use of: he lies under a necessity of speaking much and often; and the Wise Man tells us, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin^d." And certainly there is scarce any consideration more powerful, to deter a man from undertaking the office of a teacher, than this; how extremely difficult and almost impossible it is, for a man that speaks much and often, so to govern his tongue as to speak nothing that either is itself unfit, or in an unfit time, or after an undue manner; and yet how highly every teacher is concerned so to do.

So that it is a very easy knot to fasten my text to the next verse, thus: Let not every man ambitiously affect the office of a teacher in the Church of God, considering that it is an office of great difficulty and danger, "for in many things we offend all; if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man," &c. As if he had said, As there are many ways whereby the best of us do offend, so there is no way whereby we so easily fall into sin, as by that slippery member the tongue; and there is no man more exposed to this danger of transgressing with the tongue than the teacher, who makes so much and so frequent use of it. So that the teacher is *τέλειος ἀνὴρ*, "a rare and perfectly accomplished man indeed," that hath acquired the perfect government of his tongue. He that can do that, who fails not in that piece of his duty, may easily also bridle his whole body, *i. e.* rightly manage himself in all the other parts of his Pastoral office. But this, as it is

^d Prov. x. 19.

very necessary, so it is extremely difficult, and therefore “be not many teachers^e.”

To this it will not be amiss to add what Grotius wisely observes, that the admonition of the Apostle concerning the vices of the tongue, subjoined to the caution in my text, “is chiefly directed against brawling and contentious disputers^f,” such teachers as abuse their liberty of speaking unto loose discourses, and take occasion from thence to vent their own spleen and passions: men of intemperate spirits and virulent tongues, troublers rather than teachers of the people, whose tongues are indeed “cloven tongues of fire,” but not such as the Apostles were endowed with from above; as serving to burn, rather than to enlighten; to kindle the flames of faction, strife, and contention, rather than those of piety and charity in the Church of God.

And indeed the direful and tragical effects, which the Apostle in this chapter ascribes to the evil tongue, as that “it is a fire, a world of iniquity, defiling the whole body, setting on fire the course of nature, full of deadly poison^g,” &c. are such as are not so easily producible by the tongue of a private man as of a teacher; “whose discourse,” saith Erasmus, “spreads its poison by so much the more generally and effectually, as the authority of the speaker is greater, and his advantage also of speaking to many^h.”

Having removed this seeming rub in the context, I return again to the text itself; wherein you may please to observe,
1. A serious dissuasive from the rash undertaking of the Pastoral office: “My brethren, be not many masters,” or teachers.
2. A solid argument or reason to enforce it, drawn from the difficulty and the danger thereof; “knowing that we shall receive,” &c. *μείζον κρίμα*, “a greater” or severer “judgment;” *i. e.* God will require more of us that are teachers than of others; we shall not escape or be acquitted in the Divine judgment at so easy a rate as they. There is a place in the excellent Book of Wisdom that is exactly parallel to my text, and gives great light to itⁱ. “A sharp judgment shall be to

^e Μη πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε.

^f Maxime directa est in rixosos disputatores.

^g Φλογίζουσα τὸν τρόχον τῆς γενέσεως.

^h Cujus sermo hoc latius ac periculosius spargit suum venenum, quod auctoritate dicentis commendetur.

ⁱ Chap. vi. 5.

them that are in high places^k." Where the οἱ ὑπερέχοντες, those that are "in high places" in the State, answer to the διδάσκαλοι in my text, the "teachers" in the Church: the κρίσις ἀπότομος, "the sharp," or "the precise and severe judgment," to the μείζον κρίμα, "the greater judgment" in the text.

I shall not at all insist on the first branch of the division, the dissuasive, as remembering that I am to preach not an Ordination, but a Visitation Sermon; and to discourse, not to candidates of Holy Orders, but to such as are already engaged in that sacred profession. I come, therefore, to the reason or argument in the text, (as of very much concernment to all that are in the Priestly office,) drawn from the difficulty and danger thereof. To represent both which, as fully as my short allowance of time, and much shorter scantling of abilities, will permit, shall be my present business.

And first, as to the difficulty of the teacher's office, it is a very great difficulty fully to explain it. So many are the branches of his duty, that it were a tedious labour to reckon them up. Lord! what a task is it then to discharge them! I shall content myself therefore *rudi Minerva* briefly and only in general to describe the chiefest requisites that are necessary to constitute a complete teacher in the Church of God, and even by that little which I shall say, I doubt not but it will appear, how very formidable, how tremendous an undertaking, that function deserves to be accounted. The teacher's office, then, requires a very large knowledge, a great prudence, an exemplary holiness. And surely much is required of him of whom these things are required.

1. Then, the first requisite to the office of a teacher is a very large knowledge. The very name of his office implies this; he is διδάσκαλος, "a teacher;" and he that is such, must be, as the Apostle requires^l, "apt, or fit to teach^m." And this he cannot be, unless he be "well learnedⁿ" and instructed himself, and furnished with a plentiful measure of divine knowledge. God Himself, by the prophet Malachi,

^k Κρίσις ἀπότομος ἐν τοῖς ὑπερέχουσι γίνεται.

^l 1 Tim. iii. 2.

^m Διδακτικός, aptus, sive idoneus ad docendum.

ⁿ Διδάκτὸς, doctus.

requires "that the Priest's lips" **לִפְתֵּי יֹשֶׁר** "should keep or preserve knowledge^o." Methinks the expression is more emphatical than is ordinarily conceived. It seems to imply, that the Priest should be a kind of repository or treasury of knowledge, richly furnished with knowledge himself, and able also abundantly to furnish and supply the wants of those that shall at any time have recourse to him for instruction. And therefore it presently follows; "and they," (that is, the people,) "shall seek the law at his mouth." Yea, the words import that the Priest should be a treasury of knowledge not to be exhausted.

He must have knowledge, not only to spend, but to keep; not like those that live from hand to mouth, or whose stock of knowledge is quickly spent in a few sermons, but he must have something still reserved and laid up in store. Methinks our Saviour doth excellently expound this text, though it be by a parable; "Every scribe that is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old^p;" where the *γραμματεὺς*, or "scribe," is the same among the Jews with the *νομοδιάσκαλος*, "the teacher or expounder of the law." And it is the usual custom of our Saviour, as Grotius observes, "by names in use among the Jews, to express such offices as were to be in the Christian Church^q." The *γραμματεὺς*, then, or scribe, is the same with the *διδάσκαλος*, or teacher, afterwards in the Church of Christ. This scribe is said by our Saviour to be "instructed unto," or for, "the kingdom of heaven^r," *i. e.* well prepared, provided, furnished for the preaching of the Gospel. And to shew that he is so, he is compared to the householder, who, for the maintaining of his family, and the entertainment of his guests all the year long, is supposed to have an *ἀποθήκη*, or repository for provisions, (called here his *θησαυρὸς*, "his treasure,") and there to have laid in provisions *καινὰ καὶ παλαιὰ*, "both new and old," *i. e.* a great store and abundance, provisions of all sorts and kinds. As the Spouse in the Canticles tells her beloved^s, "At our gates are all manner of fruits, both new and old,

^o Chap. ii. 7.

^p Matt. xiii. 52.

^q Nominibus apud Judæos receptis significare munia, quæ futura erant in

Ecclesia Christiana.

^r Μαθητευθεὶς εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν.

^s Chap. vii. 13.

which I have laid up for thee." This kind of hospitality, (however by the iniquity of an ungrateful sacrilegious age he may be disabled from exercising the other,) is the indispensable duty of the pastor or teacher. He must keep a table well furnished with these heavenly provisions for all comers.

The knowledge of a teacher, we shall easily grant, extends itself into a very large compass, if we consider what that science is that he is to teach; theology, "the art of arts, and the science of sciences^s," as Nazianzen speaks; the queen and mistress of all other disciplines, to which they do all but *ancillare*, perform the office of handmaids, and yet in so doing they are of use and service to her.

And upon that account, the Divine, if he will be complete, must be *πανεπιστήμων*, must have compassed the *ἐνκυκλο-παιδεία*, in the modern and more noble signification of the word; *i. e.* the whole circle of arts and sciences. And he that hath so done, *illi des nominis hujus honorem*, let him pass for a perfect Divine, he only is adequate to so ample a title. But (God be thanked) this is only the heroic perfection, not the necessary qualification of a teacher. A man may very well content himself to sit in a much lower form, and yet sit safely; he may move in a far inferior orb, and yet give much light, and communicate a benign and useful influence to the Church of God. Let us view, therefore, the necessary parts of theology itself, wherein the teacher cannot be ignorant or uninstructed, but to the very great detriment of his disciples, and his own greater shame and hazard. How ample a field have we still before us! Here is theology positive, polemical, moral, casuistical, and all most necessary for the teacher.

As for positive divinity, or the knowledge of those necessary speculative truths that are revealed in Scripture, a man can no more be a Divine that is unacquainted with this, than he can be a grammarian that understands not the very first elements of grammar. And yet of so abstruse, so sublime a nature, are even these truths, that for a man rightly to apprehend them, and clearly to explain them, especially to the capacity of his duller hearers, is no very easy matter.

Polemical or controversial divinity is *theologia armata*, or

^s Τέχνη τεχνῶν καὶ ἐπιστήμη ἐπιστημῶν.

that part of divinity which instructs and furnisheth a man with necessary weapons to defend the truth against its enemies. Now the good shepherd's office is not only to feed his sheep, but to secure them from the wolves, or else his care in feeding them serves only to make them the fatter and richer prey. And therefore St. Paul^t, requires that the teacher should be able, "both by sound doctrine to exhort his hearers^u, as also to convince" or refute "the gainsayers" or opposers^x. *Hæc non sunt τοῦ τυχόντος*, (as Grotius well glosseth on the text,) every man cannot do this, and yet every teacher must. The times wherein we live do much heighten the necessity of this study: for we may enforce this duty on all teachers, by the same melancholy argument that St. Paul doth in the forementioned text. The teacher, saith he, must be able "to convince gainsayers:" why so? he gives the reason^y; "There are many unruly and vain teachers and deceivers, &c. whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not." These unruly and vain teachers, these deceivers, were never certainly in a greater number than now they are. These men's mouths must be stopped; there is a necessity for it: for otherwise they will subvert whole houses, yea, and pervert whole parishes. Not that we have any hopes in this age to stop the mouths of our opposers, so as to make them cease speaking; (for bawl they will to eternity; they are, as the Apostle somewhere speaks, "unreasonable men^z," that understand not, admit not of any topics; no argumentation, though never so convincing, will make them give back;) but so at least, as that they shall be able to speak little to the purpose, so as to satisfy sober, humble, docible persons, who have not passionately espoused an error, or, to speak in the Apostle's phrase, "that are not given up to strong delusions, to believe lies, that they may be damned." In a word, our fate in these days is much like that of the rebuilders of Jerusalem after the captivity, that were necessitated "every one, with one of his hands to work in the building, with the other to hold a weapon^a." With one hand we must build up our people in

^t Tit. i. 9.^y Ver. 10, 11.^u Καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ.^z Ἄνθρωποι ἄστοιχοι.^x Καὶ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν.^a Nehem. iv. 17.

the doctrine of piety, with the other we must resist heretical opposers, which otherwise will demolish as fast as we build.

And to quicken us to this part of our study, methinks no consideration can be more forcible than this; to observe, where Ministers are defective therein, with what triumph and ostentation deceivers carry souls captive, to the disgrace, not only of the persons, but also of the function of the teachers, yea, and of truth itself, which is wounded thus through their sides, and bleeds through their weakness and folly.

But let us leave this thorny field of controversial, and step a little into the other more fruitful, of moral or practical divinity. Of this one speaks most truly: "The knowledge of controversies is made necessary by heretics, the study of piety by God Himself^a." Theology is doubtless a practical science, nothing in it but what aims at this end. And therefore, he that neglects this practical part of it, understands not the very design of his own profession. Without this, a man deserves no more to be accounted a Divine, than he a physician that understands little or nothing of therapeutics. It is true, there are some (otherwise not unlearned men) that despise this part of theology, as a vulgar, trivial, easy, obvious thing. But sure they very much disparage their own judgment, who let the world understand that they are of this mind. And the event commonly shews how much they are mistaken. For bring these Doctors out of their academic cells, set them to preach in a country congregation, and they soon become the objects of laughter, or rather of pity, to the wiser. To observe how they greedily snatch at every occasion of engaging in a controversy, and that, perhaps, such a one as was never before heard of by their hearers, but a controversy they had read in some of their books, though long ago dead and buried, thus manfully encountering ghosts and shadows. How learnedly they will discuss the barren subtleties of Aquinas or Scotus, which the poor souls no more understand, than if they had read them a lecture out of Cornelius Agrippa's Occult Philosophy. How, when they come to practicals, they are *velut in alium mundum translati*, "as if they were entered into a new unknown world;" so frigid, barren,

^a Controversiarum scientiam necessariam fecerunt hæretici, studium pietatis Deus ipse mandavit.

and lifeless are their discourses on those subjects. And may the same shame, or a serious repentance, attend all the contemners of this useful theology.

Lastly, There is casuistical divinity, which I distinguish from moral or practical, as a more noble species thereof, and which therefore deserves a distinct consideration. For though all casuistical divinity be practical, yet all practical divinity is not casuistical; for the design of casuistical divinity is to resolve only the dubious and difficult cases that refer to practice. How difficult this study is, every man that is not a very stranger therein, will readily acknowledge. And the necessity thereof is evident: for what more necessary for a teacher, than to be able to resolve his people what their duty is in difficult cases? Teachers, no doubt, are purposely placed by God in the crossways, as Mercurial statues, not dead, but living speaking ones, directing the perplexed traveller towards the heavenly Jerusalem, and saying, (as it is in the Prophet,) "This is the way, walk therein." And the Lord by the Prophet Malachi^b, tells us, that the Priest should be such a one, as that the "people may seek the law at his mouth:" the law, *i. e.* the sense of the law, or what that duty is, which the law obligeth them to in doubtful cases: a very oracle to be consulted by them on all occasions. It is true, the greatest oracle may be sometimes silenced by a greater difficulty; but an oracle altogether dumb, is certainly a very lamentable contradiction.

I have all this while spoken nothing of the Holy Scriptures, that deep and unsearchable mine, from whence the Divine is to fetch all his treasure. From hence he is to borrow the principles of all theology, positive, polemical, moral, casuistical; and therefore it is evident, that unless he be well studied in these, he must needs be defective in all the rest. He must needs be a weak Divine that is not "mighty in the Scriptures^c," as it is said of Apollos^d. And, Lord, how many things are necessary to give a man a right understanding of these sacred writings! I confess we are fallen into a very confident age, wherein to interpret Scripture is counted the most obvious and easy thing; and every mechanic, that scarce understands common sense,

^b Chap. ii. 7.

^d Acts xviii. 24.

^c Δυνατός ἐν γραφαῖς.

will venture on the expounding of these mysterious books. We have so childishly departed from the error of the Romish Church, in asserting an inexplicable obscurity of the Scriptures, even in things necessary, that for fear of this Charybdis we are swallowed up in as dangerous a Seylla, to make the Scriptures even despicable and contemptible. For, as Nazianzen truly saith^e, “that which is thus easily understood, is generally with as much ease slighted and contemned.” But we know who they are, “who run from one bad extreme into another^f.” For it is certain, that rightly to understand the Holy Scriptures, is a very difficult thing, especially for us who live at so great a distance from those times wherein they were written, and those persons and Churches to whom they were directed. It is no slender measure of the knowledge of antiquity, history, philology, that is requisite to qualify a man for such an undertaking. They know nothing of the Holy Scriptures that know not this. And, therefore, those unlearned and ignorant men, that venture on the exposition of Scripture, being perfect strangers to these parts of learning, must, of necessity, wrest them to their own and their hearers destruction.

I cannot omit to take notice here of that common axiom, “A good textuary is a good Divine^g,” and to observe, that it is most true, if rightly understood: if by a textuary, we mean him who hath not only a concordance of Scriptures in his memory, but also a commentary on them in his understanding; who thinks it not enough to be ready in alleging the bare words of Scripture, with the mention of chapter and verse where it is written, unless he know the sense and meaning of what he recites. The former every illiterate sectary is able to do, who can quote Scriptures by dozens and scores, the title whereof he understands not, and are little to his purpose: the latter is the proper commendation of the Divine. Without this grain of salt, the aphorism but now mentioned most justly falls under the severe censure of our learned Prideaux: “A good textuary is a good Divine, say many, who understand not, mind not, either the text, or divinity, or goodness^h.”

^e Τὸ ῥαδίως ληπτὸν ἅπαν εὐκαταφρόνητον.

^f Dum vitant vitia in contraria currunt.

^g Bonus textualis, bonus theologus.

^h Bonus textualis, bonus theologus, clamant quamplurimi, qui nec de textu, nec de theologia, nec de bonitate sunt solliciti.

We have seen the necessary parts of theology rudely delineated, and yet even by this imperfect draught, we may take an estimate, how large that man's knowledge ought to be, that is obliged to understand all these things.

I confess that here also, (and I have as much reason to rejoice in it as most of my brethren,) a latitude is to be allowed; and it were a cruelty worse than that of Procrustes, to stretch all men to the same giantlike proportion of knowledge that some attain to. But yet doubtless it is a wise and prudent severity, as Nazianzen speaksⁱ, "to measure every teacher, and stretch him out to St. Paul's rules and canons." And they, as we have already heard, require that he should be διδακτικός, "apt, and fit to teach," *i. e.* in some competent measure able to instruct his hearers in all these useful parts of theology.

2. I have discoursed so largely of the first requisite of the teacher's office, that if I gave over here, I had said enough to convince any sober person of the difficulty thereof. But yet this is not all. A very great prudence also is required in the teacher, or else his knowledge will be useless and unserviceable. Wisdom is the soul that animates and enlivens knowledge; without which a large knowledge is but like a huge carcass, a lifeless inactive thing. And if any man thinks that science and prudence are things inseparable, sad experience refutes him. Every learned man is not a wise man; and there are some who have read very many books, but very few men; who have dwelt so much in their studies, that they understand little abroad in the world, no, not in their own little world, I mean their charges and parishes. There are some that have a large measure of the spirit of knowledge, but want the spirit of government, which yet is most necessary for him, who is to be a guide of souls. Every teacher is concerned to be wise, both for himself and those committed to his charge. For himself, to take heed of men, that he be neither betrayed by false brethren, nor become a prey to the malice of professed enemies; to decline both the envy and contempt of his neighbours, to keep himself within the bounds of his calling, "to mind his own business^k," &c. To this kind of wisdom belongs the advice of our Saviour, when sending forth His Apostles, as innocent

ⁱ Παρεκτείνειν τοῖς Παύλου κανόσι.

^k Τὰ ἴδια πράσσειν.

lambs amongst the wolves of that age ; He cautions them to “ be wise as serpents, and innocent as doves¹,” *i. e.* to use all honest and sinless arts to secure themselves. But this is not the prudence which I principally intend ; for if a Minister be defective in this, he is no man’s foe but his own ; he hurts only himself, and that but in his temporal concerns.

I add, therefore, that he is to be wise for those committed to his charge, lest by any indiscretion of his, he obstructs that which ought to be his great design and business, the eternal salvation of their souls. And here how many things are there, which a teacher is concerned to understand ! He must be wise so to frame his discourses, especially in public, that he speak nothing that may either offend the weak, or give advantage to the malicious ; that his Sermons may not only be good in themselves, but adapted and fitted to the necessity of his hearers ; that he make choice of the most suitable and powerful arguments to enforce on them those Christian duties whereto he exhorts them. He must be wise in the government of his carriage and actions, distinguishing especially between lawfulness and expediency, and shunning, not only that which is directly sinful, but whatsoever is scandalous and offensive. He must be wise in his common converse with his people, that he be neither of too easy, or of too morose and difficult an access ; but especially he is to be careful of this in his freer conversation ; that he indulge not himself any liberty more than ordinary, among those who will make an ill use of that wherein there was no ill intended. He is to be wise in the choice of his friends ; not to inscribe any man into that catalogue, that may reflect any disparagement on his person or function. For, *qui non contemnitur a se, contemnitur a socio*. He must be wise, especially in the government of his own family : for, as the Apostle excellently reasons, “ if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God^m ? ” He must be wise to inquire into the state of his flock, and to discern their particular tempers and constitutions ; and even to search into their hearts and secret inclinations. He must be wise to administer private counsels and reproofs, duly observing the circumstances of time, of place, of person, of disposition. For,

¹ Matt. x. 16.

^m 1 Tim. iii. 5.

as the wisest of men tells us, "a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silverⁿ." These, and many other things, the teacher is deeply concerned to be well versed in: and what a task is this!

If it be objected, That prudence is a thing without our power, an arbitrary gift of God, which He bestows on whom He pleaseth, as He doth beauty, or wealth, or a good natural wit, and therefore cannot reasonably be imposed on a man as his duty: I answer, If this prudence were wholly out of our election, yet this certainly was left to our free choice, whether we would undertake that office whereto so great prudence is requisite. We have obliged ourselves to it, by engaging in that function, that cannot be discharged without it. But, indeed, this excellent gift of God is in a great degree put within our power, in conjunction with the Divine assistance. We may and must endeavour for it, diligently study it, carefully observe things and persons, faithfully record experiments, consult wiser friends: but, above all things, we must take St. James's advice, "If any man want wisdom, let him ask of God, Who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him^o." Especially if he desire it constantly, earnestly, and above all things in the world; if, with Solomon, he despise greatness and wealth, and all other secular advantages; and, before them all, desire this one thing of God, "that He would give him wisdom and knowledge to go in and out before the people committed to his charge and guidance^p."

3. I come now to the last, though not the least of those requisites, that are necessary to the office of a teacher, viz. an exemplary holiness. For of this I may say, as the Apostle doth, speaking of the three theological graces^q, "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity." So here, there remaineth knowledge, prudence, holiness, all three necessary requisites to make up a complete teacher, but the greatest of these is holiness. And what he farther says of the same grace of charity, in the beginning of the same chapter, may with a little change be applied also to our present purpose. If a man had *πάσαν γνῶσιν*,

ⁿ Prov. xxv. 11.

^o James i. 5.

^p 2 Chron. i. 10.

^q 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

"all sorts of knowledge," so as to be able to "understand all mysteries;" if he were prudent, beyond the prodigious measure of Solomon's wisdom; if those endowments were crowned in him, with an eloquence more than human, so that he were able to discourse like an angel; yet without this holiness he were as nothing, or at best but as "the sounding brass," or "tinkling cymbal." The Priest that is not "clothed with righteousness," though otherwise richly adorned with all the ornaments of human and divine literature, and those gilded over with the rays of a seraphic prudence and sagacity, is yet but a naked, beggarly, despicable creature, of no authority, no interest, no use or service, in the Church of God. The unholy teacher, let him preach never so well, discourseth to little purpose; there will be no life in his doctrine, because his life is so destitute of the spirit of holiness; he will sooner damn his own soul, than save any man's else. His discourses, though armed with the most powerful oratory, will serve to move no other affection in his hearers, than that of indignation against his hypocrisy and impudence, to hear him excellently declaim against a vice, of which himself is notoriously guilty; and they will say,

Loripedem rectus derideat, Æthiopem albus.

In a word, as a wise man well observes, "every notorious vice is infinitely against the spirit of government, and depresses a man to an evenness with common persons."

— *Facinus quos inquinat æquat.*

And when a man's authority is thus lost, he becomes a thing wholly useless in the Church of God. Useless, did I say? it were well if that were all: he is the most pernicious creature that moves on God's earth: he serves to the worst purposes; to make men atheists, infidels, or heretics. Learned and knowing men, of ill lives, have been always the greatest stumblingblock in the Church of God; their fall is not single, but attended with the ruin of many others; who, imitating the barbarous civility of those nations that use to solemnize the funerals of their great men by sacrificing a great part of their families, when their teachers damn themselves, are ready to die and perish with them for company. And the fallacy that ruins them, is this; because some wise men live wickedly, they presently conclude, that wickedness is the greatest wisdom: as

if it were impossible for the will to choose contrary to the dictates of the understanding, or for a man that knows his duty not to do it. We of this age have reason to take special notice of this. For as Cicero, inquiring into the causes of those bold and unheard-of attempts, that Catiline and his confederates made upon the commonwealth of Rome, presently gives this account; *Nos (dico aperte) nos consules desumus*: so, when we are astonished at the prodigious blasphemies, heresies, and schisms of our times, and wonder at the cause of them, we may quickly resolve ourselves after the same manner; *Nos (dico aperte) nos pastores desumus*. For certainly all the arguments that heretics and sectaries have made use of, to seduce our people from obedience unto the most excellent doctrine, liturgy, and discipline of our Church, would have been accounted ridiculous sophisms, and no way served their wicked purposes, if they had not been furnished with a more powerful topic *ab exemplo* from the vicious lives of some Clergymen. And as to this,

Pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

I might here be very large in representing the necessity of holiness in a Minister; but I shall only observe, that the wicked teacher sins with the highest aggravation of his guilt, and the least hope of his repentance; he is the greatest and most desperate sinner.

The greatest sinner; for either he is a person of more than ordinary knowledge, or he is not: if not, he sinned greatly in undertaking that office, to which so great a knowledge is requisite: if he be, his knowledge doubtless increaseth his guilt. "For he that knows his Master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes^r." Besides, he must needs sin with a very strange assurance, by living in that wickedness which he daily reproves and preaches against, and so becoming *αὐτοκατάκριτος*, "a condemned man," from his own mouth.

But that which I chiefly urge is this: the wicked teacher is, of all men living, in the most hopeless and desperate condition. It is usually observed of seamen, that dwell in the great deep, that if they are not very pious, for the most part they are desperately wicked; because they daily behold the wonders of

^r [Luke xii. 47.]

the Lord, and besides live in a continual and very near danger, bordering upon the very confines of death, and being,

Quatuor aut septem digitis a morte remoti;

“but a few fingers breadth divided from their fluid graves.” And if these considerations do not persuade them to “fear the Lord exceedingly,” as it is said of the mariners in Jonah i. 16, it argues that they are exceedingly hardened. The observation is truer of the Minister; if he be not a good man, he must needs be extremely bad; for he daily converseth in the great deep of the Holy Scriptures, and there sees and reads such things, that if they do not effectually persuade him to piety, it is certain he is a man of an obdurate heart.

What remedy is likely to work this man's cure and repentance? Will the dreadful menaces and threats of God's word affright him? No; these are daily thundered out of his own mouth, and yet to him they are but *bruta fulmina*. Will the gracious promises of God allure him? No; he daily charms his hearers with these, but remains himself as the deaf adder. Will those excellent books of learned and pious men, that he reads in his study, work any good on him? No; he that slights God's word, will little regard the words of men. Will the public prayers make him serious? No; he daily reads them, and his daily practice is contrary to his daily prayers. Will a medicine compounded of the flesh and blood of the Son of God (I mean the Holy Eucharist) do the miserable man any good? No; he hath frequently received those dear pledges of his Saviour's love, and yet is still as bad as ever, and so hath “trodden under foot the blood of the everlasting covenant,” wherewith he should have been sanctified. The Lord look upon this man, for there is no hope of him without a miracle of Divine mercy: nay, indeed, all these excellent means, by being made familiar to him, have lost their efficacy upon him. Our Saviour, methinks, doth excellently represent the hopeless condition of a vicious Minister, by a parable^t, where, speaking to the Apostles, (considered, I suppose, as Ministers of the word,) He tells them, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewithal shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and trodden under

^t Matt. v. 13.

foot of men." Salt, if it be good, is of excellent use to season many things; but if it become itself unsavoury, it is not only the most useless thing, "good for nothing but to be cast out," &c. but irrecoverably lost; there is nothing will fetch putrid salt again: "for if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewithal shall it be salted?" Thus necessary is holiness in a Minister, both for himself and others.

I have now done with the difficulty, and consequently with the danger, of the Pastoral office, represented from the three grand requisites thereunto; a very large knowledge, a great prudence, an exemplary holiness. I shall add but one consideration more, of itself abundantly sufficient to evince the whole; viz. that every teacher is accountable for the souls committed to his charge. This is the plain doctrine of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews^t; "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account," &c. A dreadful consideration this! And St. Chrysostom tells us, that when he read that text, "it did *κατασείλειν τὴν ψυχὴν*, cause a kind of earthquake within him, and produce a holy fear and trembling in his soul." And in his commentary on the text, he thus exclaims, "Lord how, how difficult, how hazardous an undertaking, is this! What shall a man say to those wretched men, that rashly thrust themselves into such an abyss of judgments? All the souls that are committed to thy conduct, men, women, and children, thou art to give an account of^x." He presently subjoins, "It is a wonder if any ruler in the Church be saved^y:" a passionate hyperbole, expressing his deep sense of the extreme danger of the Pastoral office.

It is true, indeed, the excellent Bishop speaks there of those of his own most sacred order, whose place and dignity in the Church of God, as it is eminently higher, their charge greater, their inspection more extensive, so will their account be accordingly. But yet the same is true in its proportion of every Clergyman, of what order soever he be. So St. Austin expressly; "If you mark it, (most dear brethren,) you shall

^t Chap. xiii. 17.

^x Βαβα! πόσος ὁ κίνδυνος! τί ἂν τις εἴποι πρὸς τοὺς ἀθλοῦς τοὺς ἐπιβρίπτοντας ἑαυτοὺς τοσαύτῃ τιμωριῶν ἀβύσσῳ; πάν-

των ὦν ἄρχεις γυναικῶν, καὶ ἀνδρῶν καὶ παίδων σὺ λόγον δίδως.

^y Θαυμάζω εἰ τιὰ ἐστὶ τῶν ἀρχόντων σωθῆναι.

find that all the Lord's Priests, not only Bishops, but also Presbyters and Ministers of Churches, stand in a very hazardous condition^z." And he gives a shrewd reason for what he says a little after; "If at the day of judgment it will be a hard task for every man to give an account of his own soul, what will become of Priests, of whom God will require an account of the souls of so many others committed to their charge^a?" He concludes, *Magnum opus, sed gravis sarcina*: "The care of souls is indeed a great work, a noble undertaking, but yet a very grievous burden." He must be a man of very firm shoulders that is not crushed under it.

I have oftentimes, not without wonder and indignation, observed the strange confidence of empirics in physic, that dare venture on the practice of that noble art, which they do not at all understand; considering how for a little paltry gain, they shrewdly hazard, or rather certainly destroy, the health and lives of men; and have judged them worthy of as capital and ignominious a punishment as those that kill men on the highways. But I have soon exchanged this meditation into another of more concernment to myself; and my indignation hath quickly returned into my own bosom, when I consider how much bolder and more hazardous an attempt it is for a man to venture on the Priestly office; to minister to the eternal health and salvation of souls. How much skill is requisite to qualify a man for such an undertaking! how great care in the discharge of it! What a sad thing it would be if, through my unskilfulness or negligence, any one soul should miscarry under my hands, or die and perish eternally!

We minister to souls. Souls! Methinks in that one word there is a sermon. Immortal souls! precious souls! one whereof is more worth than all the world besides, the price of the blood of the Son of God. I close up this with the excellent words appointed by the Church to be read at the Ordination of every Priest: "Have always therefore in your remembrance how great a treasure is committed to your charge; for they are the sheep of

^z Si diligenter attenditis (fratres charissimi) omnes Sacerdotes Domini, non solum Episcopos, sed etiam Presbyteros et Ministros Ecclesiarum, in grandi periculo esse cognoscitis.

^a Si enim pro se unusquisque vix poterit in die iudicii rationem reddere, quid de Sacerdotibus futurum est, a quibus sunt omnium animæ requirendæ?

Christ, "which He bought with His death, and for whom He shed His blood. The Church and congregation whom ye serve, is His spouse and body. And if it shall happen the same Church, or any member thereof, to take any hurt or hinderance by reason of your negligence, you know the greatness of the fault, and also the horrible punishment that will ensue."

And now, methinks, I may use the Apostle's words in another case^b. "Ye see your calling, brethren^c;" you see how extremely difficult and hazardous an office it is we have undertaken; "Who is sufficient for these things^d?" Whose loins do not tremble at this fearful burden on his shoulders? Who would not be almost tempted to repent himself of his undertaking, and to wish himself any the meanest mechanic rather than a Minister? But, alas! this were vain, yea, sinful. We are engaged in this sacred office, and there is no retreating; we must now run the hazard, how great soever it be: in we are, and on we must. What shall we then say? what shall we do? Surely this is our best, yea, our only course. Let us first prostrate ourselves at the feet of the Almighty God, humbly confessing and heartily bewailing our great and manifold miscarriages in this weighty undertaking; let us weep tears of blood (if it were possible) for the blood of souls, which we have reason to fear may stick upon our garments. The blood of souls, I say: for when I consider how many less discerned ways there be, whereby a man may involve himself in that guilt, as not only by an openly vicious example, but even by a less severe, prudent, and wary conversation; not only by actions directly criminal, but by lawful actions, when offensive, (for by these, the Apostle assures us, "a man may destroy the soul of his weak brother, for whom Christ died^e,") not only by a gross negligence and supine carelessness, but by every lesser remission of those degrees of zeal and diligence, which are requisite in so important an affair: in a word, by not doing all that a man can, and lies within his power, to save the souls committed to his charge: I say, when I consider this, for mine own part I cannot, I dare not justify myself, or plead

^b 1 Cor. i. 26.

ii. 16.]

^c Βλέπετε τὴν κλησιν ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί.

^e Rom. xiv. 15.

^d Καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα τίς ἰκανός; [2 Cor.

Not guilty, before the great Judge of heaven and earth; but do upon the bended knees of my soul, bewail my sin, and implore His pardoning grace and mercy; crying mightily unto Him; "Deliver me from this bloodguiltiness, O my God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness^f."

Having laid ourselves at God's feet, let us not lie idly there, but arise, and for the future do the work of God with all faithfulness and industry; yea, let us make amends for our past negligence, by doubling our future diligence. And for our encouragement here, let us remember, that though many things are required of a Minister, yet the chief and most indispensable requisites, are these two; a passionate desire to save souls, and an unwearied diligence in the pursuit of that noble design. The Minister that wants these two qualifications, will hardly pass the test, or gain the approbation of God, the great Judge and Trier; but where these are found, they will cover a multitude of other failings and defects. Let us therefore, reverend brethren, (and may I here conjure both you and myself, by the endeared love we bear to our own souls, and the precious souls committed to our charge, yea, by the blood of the Son of God, the price of both,) let us, I beseech you, from henceforth return to our several charges, zealously and industriously plying the great work and business that is before us. Let us think no pains too great to escape that *μεῖζον κρίμα*, that "greater judgment," that otherwise attends us. Let us study hard, and read much, and pray often, and "preach in season and out of season," and catechise the youth, and take wise opportunities of instructing those, who being of riper years, may yet be as unripe in knowledge; and visit the sick, and according to our abilities relieve the poor; shewing to all our flock the example of a watchful, holy, humble conversation. And may a great blessing of God crown our labours! Let us go on, and the Lord prosper us.

I have done *ad clerum*, and have but a word more *ad populum*, "to the people."

My brethren, you may possibly think yourselves altogether unconcerned in this whole discourse. But if you do, you are

^f [Psalm li. 14.]

mistaken; all this nearly concerns even you. I shall only point to you wherein.

1. If the Pastoral office be so tremendous an undertaking, judge then, I pray you, of the sacrilegious boldness and impiety of those Uzzahs among the laity, that dare touch this ark, the Priest's charge and care. If we, my brethren, that have been trained up in the schools of the prophets, that have been educated with no small care and cost to this employment, that have spent a double apprenticeship of years in our studies, and most of us a great deal more: if we, I say, after all this, find reason to tremble at our insufficiency for such an undertaking, how horrible is the confidence, or rather impudence, of those mechanics, that have leaped from the shopboard or plough into the pulpit, and thus *per saltum*, by a prodigious leap, commenced teachers! What shall we say to these mountebanks in the Church, these empirics in theology? I only say this; I can never sufficiently admire, either their boldness in venturing to be teachers, or the childish folly and simplicity of those that give themselves up to be their disciples. It is a miracle that any such person should dare to preach; or if he do, that any man in his right wits should vouchsafe to hear him.

2. This discourse concerning the difficulty and hazard of the Priestly office, shews sufficiently all the people's danger. It is the danger your own souls are in, my brethren, if not carefully looked to, that is the great hazard of our office. O therefore, if you do consider it, what need have you to look to yourselves!

3. Lastly, If our work and office be attended with this difficulty, sure it is your duty to pity us, to pray for us, to encourage us by all possible ways and means to the vigorous performance of it; at least not to add to our load, or discourage us, either by your wayward factiousness, or stubborn profaneness, or sacrilegious injustice: if you do, sad will be your account.

Remember, therefore, the advice of the Apostle^g, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do this" (*i. e.* attend on this work of watching

^g Heb. xiii. 17.

over your souls) “with joy, and not with grief^h.” Grotius’s paraphrase is here most genuine; “Sweeten and allay the irksome labour of your teachers, by performing to them all offices of respect and love, that they may with alacrity, and not with grief, discharge that function, which is of itself a sufficient burden, without any addition of sorrow from you^l.”

Now to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

^g ἵνα μετὰ χαρᾶς τοῦτο ποιῶσι, καὶ μὴ στενάζοντες.

^h Muleete eum laborem omnibus obsequiis et officiis, ut eum alacritate

potius quam dolore fungantur munere satis gravi, etiamsi a vobis nihil triste accedat.

SERMON VII.

THE DIFFERENT DEGREES OF BLISS AND GLORY IN CHRIST'S HEAVENLY KINGDOM, ANSWER TO THE DIFFERENT DEGREES OF GRACE HERE BELOW. SEVERAL OBJECTIONS AGAINST THIS DOCTRINE ARE ANSWERED.

2 PETER i. 11.

For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

IT is the great concern of every man, in the first place, to get the saving grace of God, and having gotten it, to proceed and increase in it; earnestly to reach after a principle of the Divine life within himself, and having attained it, to cherish and improve it; to endeavour of evil (as we are all naturally, and antecedently to the Divine grace) to become truly good, and then every day to grow better; first to be sincere disciples of the holy Jesus, and then to aspire, study, and labour hard, to become great proficient in His divine school. This latter duty, St. Peter earnestly and vehemently presseth on the converted Jews of the dispersion, to whom he writes, and in them upon all of us, in the verses preceding my text; where he exhorts them in the most emphatical expressions, to an holy covetousness after spiritual riches, and to accumulate and heap up heavenly treasures with as much greediness, as the men of this world do their gold and silver: to add one grace to another, and one degree of each grace upon another, and to abound in virtue and good works. For after he had^a minded them of the great design of Christianity, which is to make men "partakers

^a Ver. 1.

of the Divine nature," by rescuing them from "the corruption that is in the world through lust;" *i. e.* to convert men from their evil and wicked courses, and to bring them to a state of grace and regeneration; and charitably supposing this to be already done in them, he proceeds to shew them their farther duty^b, "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. For if all these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." As if he had said, You have now, God be thanked, escaped the pollutions of the world and are truly, I hope, converted to Christianity, and in Baptism have been regenerated by the Holy Ghost; (that he means by their being "made partakers of the Divine nature"). This, indeed, is a very great achievement, and an invaluable mercy of God, vouchsafed to you; yet, I beseech you, rest not here; but "besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue," &c. So that the sum of his discourse is to press them first to truth in grace, and then to growth in grace; to acquire the divine virtues reckoned up by him, and then to abound in them. And to persuade them to this abounding in grace and virtue, he useth a very powerful motive and argument in the words of my text: "for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." As if he had said, If you thus abound in grace, you shall abound in glory; you shall not only come to heaven, or get just within the gate of that glorious region, (and yet happy is he that can arrive to be but "a door-keeper in the house" of his heavenly Father,) but you shall have an "abundant entrance" into it; you shall go very far, and attain an higher pitch and degree of glory there. This is the plain and obvious sense of the words.

Not to spend time needlessly, or to trouble you with any farther preface, the text thus briefly explained and considered, with relation to the context, readily and of itself offers to us this proposition.

^b Ver. 5—8.

There shall be degrees of bliss and glory in Christ's heavenly kingdom; and the more we abound in grace and good works here, the more abundant shall our reward be hereafter.

This proposition I intend, with the Divine assistance, for the theme and subject of my following discourse.

That this is no nice or fruitless speculation, fitted only to exercise the wits of men, or to entertain their curiosity; but a branch "of that truth which is according to godliness^c," as the Apostle Paul expresseth it^d; that is, a doctrine tending to the advancement and furtherance of piety and virtue amongst men, will be soon evident to any man, that with any degree of serious attention shall consider it.

If this be a truth, it must needs be a useful one, and of concernment to us. And that it is so, will farther appear to all, from those other texts of Scripture, wherein it is not only plainly taught, but also urged as a motive to a more fruitful piety, which shall be produced in the sequel of my discourse; wherein I shall prescribe to myself this plain and easy method.

First, I shall farther prove the proposition by other clear and express texts of Scripture, and by reasons and arguments grounded on Scripture, and by the consent of the Catholic Church, interpreting the Scripture to the same sense. In the next place, I shall endeavour to answer the principal objections that are usually made against this truth. Lastly, I shall conclude with a brief application of the whole discourse.

First, For the fuller demonstration of the point, let us, in the first place, hear what the Holy Ghost hath, in other places of Scripture, delivered concerning it. And here, out of a great abundance of texts that might be alleged, I shall make choice only of such as speak more plainly and evidently to our purpose.

Such is that text in the nineteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel; where to St. Peter, asking what reward he and the rest of the Apostles should have, that had forsaken their all in this world to follow Christ, and be His disciples^e; our Saviour thus answers^f, "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have

^c Ἀληθείας τῆς κατ' εὐσέβειαν.

^d Tit. i. 1.

^e Ver. 27.

^f Ver. 28.

followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." So I read the text. For it is evident enough, our translators have mispointed it, referring the words "in the regeneration," to that which went before, thus; "Ye which have followed Me in the regeneration:" whereas they should be joined to the following words, thus: "Ye which have followed Me, ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ "in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory," &c. "In the regeneration;" what is that? Not in baptism, nor in the regeneration or renewing of the Spirit, as some have fancied; for neither of these significations will make good sense in this place; but in the resurrection, which will be indeed a *παλιγγενεσία*, "a regeneration," or second generation of men to life, after that life, which they had in their first generation, was extinguished. Which second generation, or production of men to life, is more properly the work of God, as being effected solely by His divine power, without the concurrence of any second causes; whereas, in our first generation into the world, our parents were instruments. Hence those words of the Psalmist concerning Christ^κ, "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee," are said by St. Paul to be then fulfilled in Him, when God raised Him from the dead; "The promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee^h." And hence also, all the godly are said at the resurrection to become the "children of God," *eo nomine*, upon the very account of their being then raised by God to a blessed immortal life; They are called "the children of God, being the children of the resurrectionⁱ."

Well then! In or at the regeneration, or resurrection, when Christ shall sit in the throne of His glory, as the Judge of men and angels, it is promised to the twelve Apostles, that they "also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Concerning the full sense of which words, though

^κ Psalm ii. 7.

ⁱ Luke xx. 36.

^h Acts xiii. 32, 33.

there is some dispute, yet this is generally agreed among interpreters, and it is most evident from the context, that they express some singular and eminent glory, which the Apostles should receive in the world to come, as the reward of their singular and eminent self-denial, in devoting themselves to Christ's Gospel. And though every saint shall in his degree be enthroned in the heavenly glory; yet here are twelve thrones of judicature and preeminence, answering to the twelve Apostles then in being. Indeed Judas, one of the twelve, afterward fell from his office, and so lost his throne too. But this was through his own default, and our blessed Lord failed not in His promise. But the cursed traitor, by his horrid violation of the condition of it, forfeited his right therein. There being twelve Apostles at that time to whom our Saviour spake these words, He saith, "they should sit upon twelve thrones;" as if Judas also should have his throne to sit on; not that He thought the wretch should ever attain that throne, (for He knew him from the beginning to be a devil,) but because, if Judas had continued in the faithful discharge of his office, as the other Apostles did, he should have had his throne, as the other Apostles had theirs, as St. Chrysostom well observes; for Christ speaks of His Apostles, *secundum præsentem justitiam*, "according to their present righteousness," and not so much of their persons, as of their state and office.

As if He should have said, The office of Apostles, as it is an office of the highest service, labour, and difficulty, so it hath the highest reward propounded to it; insomuch, that they who well perform it, shall be advanced to the most eminent thrones of glory in the life to come, and be nearest to Myself, the King of glory. For, to "sit upon thrones, judging" (or governing, or being over) "the twelve tribes of Israel," is a metaphorical expression, taken (as Grotius well observes upon the place) from the ancient state of the kingdom of Israel, in which *οἱ φυλάρχαι*, "the princes," or "heads of the tribes," came nearest in dignity to the King's majesty, and in the public assemblies sat next to the royal throne in chairs of state made of ivory. So that it is manifest, Christ here promiseth His Apostles an eminent degree of glory and dignity in His heavenly kingdom. And hence the language is different, which our Saviour useth,

concerning the reward of those who should afterwards imitate the Apostles, and follow them in their active and passive virtue, though *haud æquis passibus*, “at a very humble distance.” For of those in the next verse he saith, that “they should receive an hundredfold,” (a very ample and liberal reward of their self-denial, in whatsoever instance expressed,) “and inherit everlasting life;” but He doth not say, as of the Apostles, that they shall “sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

The next place we shall cite will give light to the former, and speaks more clearly to our present purpose. It is to be found in the very next chapter, the twentieth chapter of the same Gospel of St. Matthew, where we read^k, that the mother of the sons of Zebedee, James and John, came with her two sons to Christ with this petition, “Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom.” She had heard from her sons, that the Apostles in general had a promise of a more eminent dignity in Christ’s kingdom, like that of the princes or heads of the tribes in the kingdom of Israel, as hath been already noted. But she knew, that even among the Apostles themselves, there would be degrees of dignity; as in the ancient kingdom of Israel, the two first places belonged to the princes of the tribes of Judah and Joseph; these two first places, therefore, she asks for her two sons in the kingdom of Christ. To sit at the right hand of a king, according to the eastern custom, is the very next place of dignity to the king himself. Hence Solomon, sitting on his royal throne, commanded his mother to be set on his right hand^l; consequently, the third place of dignity in the kingdom is described by sitting at the king’s left hand; for accordingly as any man was greater in the kingdom, so in the public assemblies he sat nearer to the king. To this petition of Salome, our blessed Lord, having first by the way given a check to her vanity and her erroneous opinion about His kingdom, at length^m He thus more directly answers, “To sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father.” Christ speaks as man in the state of humiliation, referring all things of His

^k Ver. 20, 21.

^l 1 Kings ii. 19.

^m Ver. 23.

kingdom (according to His manner) to His Father, from Whom He received it. But as to our present purpose: our Saviour denies not that there shall be a right-hand and a left-hand place, as a first and second place of dignity, and consequently a third place, and so downwards, in His heavenly kingdom; yea, He plainly asserts, that there shall be such degrees of honour therein; but He only teacheth, that those places and degrees shall be distributed according to the pleasure of His Father, Who best knows who are fittest for them; and that this pleasure of God was not yet to be made known, either to Salome and her sons, or to any of the sons of men; but the discovery of it to be reserved to the revelation of the righteous judgment of God at the last day. So that this text very manifestly confirms the proposition; especially if we add the words of our Saviour presently afterwards in the same chapter, spoken upon the same occasionⁿ; “Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister: and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.” For hence St. Jerome thus argues against Jovinian, “If we shall be equal in heaven, we in vain humble ourselves here, that we may be greater there^o.” Indeed our Saviour, in these words, most plainly acknowledgeth, that there shall be some greater, some lesser, some first or chief, some inferior, in His heavenly kingdom; and He shews that the only way to attain a preeminence hereafter, is by the lowest humility here, and by condescending to the meanest for their spiritual good and advantage.

The same doctrine is plainly taught us (whatever some learned men have fancied to the contrary) from the very scope of the parable of our Saviour^p of the ten servants, who received of their lord, being to go into a far country, each of them a pound, to trade with till his return. At which time, he that had increased his pound to ten pounds, was made “ruler over ten cities^q,” and he that gained but five pounds was made “ruler over five cities^r,” the lord’s reward bearing proportion to the several improvements made by his servants.

ⁿ Ver. 26, 27.

^o Si omnes in cælo æquales futuri sumus, frustra nos hic humiliamus, ut ibi possimus esse majores. Lib. ii. contr.

Jovin. c. 18.

^p Luke xix.

^q Ver. 16, 17.

^r Ver. 18, 19.

To the same sense and purpose, very many of the ancient Fathers, and the most learned modern interpreters, generally expound those words of our Saviour^s, “In My Father’s house are many mansions.” The multitude of mansions in heaven seems hardly intelligible, without admitting a difference of degrees in the heavenly glory. For if all the saints should be placed in one and the same degree or station of bliss, they would have all one and the same mansion in heaven; but in our heavenly Father’s house, there are *μοναὶ πολλαὶ*, “many mansions,” some higher, some lower, according to the measure of proficiency in virtue, which men have attained to in this life. So Clemens Alexandrinus, “There are with the Lord many rewards and mansions, according to the proportion of men’s lives^t.” So also Tertullian, “How are there many mansions with the Father, but according to the variety of merits^u?” that is, (in the language of those writers,) the good works of men. So the Fathers of the Church afterward alleged this text against Jovinian, who held a parity of rewards in the life to come.

Another common proof of this doctrine, is taken out of the first Epistle to the Corinthians^x; “There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.” It is true, in the context of this place, the manifest scope and intent of the Apostle is, to shew the vast difference between those bodies of ours that die and turn to corruption, and the glorious bodies we shall receive at the resurrection. But yet, in these words it seems plain, that the Apostle riseth higher, and by the way sets forth the disparity that there will be at the resurrection, even among the glorified bodies of the saints; some shining with brighter, some with lesser, rays of glory: as among the heavenly lights, some are more glorious than others. As if he should have said, There is a difference, not only between the terrestrial and

^s John xiv. 2.

^t Εἰς τὴν γὰρ παρὰ Κυρίου καὶ μισθοὶ καὶ μοναὶ πλείονες, κατ’ ἀναλογίαν βίων. Strom. iv. p. 488. [p. 579. also l. vi. p. 797.]

^u Quomodo multae mansiones apud Patrem, si non pro varietate meritorum? *Scorpiace*. [c. 6. also de Monogam. c. 10.]

Irenæus agrees with this, v. 36. so also Origen, in Num. Hom. I. §. 3. vol. ii. p. 277. and in Jesu Naue, Hom. X. p. 422. but in vol. i. p. 106. (de Princip. II. ii. §. 6.) he interprets it of the different heavens through which persons will pass.]

^x Chap. xv. 41, 42.

celestial bodies, but even the celestial bodies differ among themselves: the sun being the brightest of the heavenly lights, the moon in its appearance to us, the next to it; and among the stars, some being more bright and conspicuous than others. So in the resurrection, not only the glorified bodies of the saints shall differ from their corruptible bodies they had here, but also among those glorified bodies themselves there shall be degrees of glory.

Unless we thus expound the Apostle, it will be hard to give a tolerable account of his discourse in this place. For we must otherwise suppose, that he compares those bodies that "are sown in corruption," the rotten stinking carcasses of men, to some of the glorious heavenly lights, though of a lesser magnitude; than which comparison, what can be more incongruous or absurd! Hence Tertullian in the place in part already cited, thus understands the text, "How are there many mansions with the Father, unless it be according to the variety of men's good works? How also shall one star differ from another star in glory, but according to the diversity of rays or beams of light?" And as the greatest, so the best part of modern interpreters, acknowledge this exposition of the Apostle's words to be true and genuine, yea and absolutely necessary.

But our last text of Scripture will put the matter out of all doubt, which we read 2 Cor. ix. 6; "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully²." It is certain, and confessed by all, that the design of the Apostle in this place, is to excite and stir up the Corinthians to a liberal charity towards their distressed brethren, and that his chief argument is contained in these words. It is confessed also, that in these words, "to sow," signifies to do good works, particularly works of charity; "to reap," to receive the reward, the future eternal reward of such works. Indeed the Apostle elsewhere plainly interprets himself to this sense; viz. "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting²." Where also the latter

¹ Quomodo multæ mansiones apud Patrem, si non pro varietate meritorum? pro diversitate radiorum?
 Quomodo et stella a stella distabit, nisi ² Gal. vi. 8.

words manifestly respect, in the first place, works of charity and beneficence, particularly such as are exercised towards our spiritual teachers, as appears from verse 6; "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate to him that teacheth in all good things." Now our Apostle, in the place alleged out of his Epistle to the Corinthians, expressly asserts, that as our "sowing" is more sparing or more liberal, so shall our "reaping" be also; the greater charity exercised by us in this world, the greater felicity and happiness attends us in the world to come; and so, on the contrary, the thinner our seeds of charity are sown here, the lesser will be our harvest of glory hereafter. Nothing can be more express to our purpose than this testimony; and, therefore, I shall seek after no other or farther proofs from Scripture of the proposition I have undertaken to demonstrate.

But to these direct testimonies of Scripture, I shall only add, by way of overplus, one or two reasons, or arguments, grounded on Scripture.

1. It is certain, that amongst the damned there will be an inequality of punishments, some suffering lesser, others greater, degrees of torment; therefore it is highly reasonable to think, that in the opposite state of the blessed, there will be also a disparity of rewards. The antecedent is determined, and beyond all contradiction asserted, by our Saviour Himself. For speaking of the town or city that shall reject the Gospel preached to them by the Apostles, He tells us, that "it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city^a." And in the next chapter He assures us, that "it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for Chorazin and Bethsaida," who had heard His doctrine and seen His miracles, and would be converted by neither of them; and that "it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom," than for Capernaum, upon the same account^b. And most express are His words^c; "And that servant, which knew his master's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy

^a Matt. x. 15.

^b Matt. xi. 20—21.

^c Luke xii. 47, &c.

of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

2. There are degrees of honour and glory among the angels in heaven, and though they are all of them glorious creatures, yet among them some are higher, some inferior in dignity, some are greater, others lesser: therefore we have reason to conclude, that there will be an order and gradation among the blessed saints of heaven likewise. For we are sure, that in the future state, we shall be like unto the angels; and why not in this? Seeing in the angelical polity there are divers orders, ranks, and degrees, can we imagine that the communion of the saints in heaven shall be a levelled society? This is utterly incredible. Now the antecedent here again is most evident from Scripture; and though we dare not intrude ourselves into the things we have not seen, or imitate the temerity of that learned and sublime conjecturer, Dionysius, who undertakes to reckon up exactly the several orders of the angelical hierarchy, as if he had seen a muster of the heavenly host before his eyes; yet that there are orders and degrees among the blessed angels, we may with all assurance affirm, having the plainest warrant of the holy text for the assertion. For we often read in Scripture, not only of angels, but also of archangels, *i. e.* chief angels, that have a preeminence above the rest. This is so known and confessed by every man, that we need not cite the texts wherein mention is made of them.

To these reasons we may add the consent of the Catholic Church in this question. It is certain, that it was ever held in the primitive Church, as an undoubted truth, that there shall be a disparity of rewards in the life to come; and that this was never called into question, until the conceited opinionist, Jovinian, among his other paradoxes, ventured to broach the contrary doctrine. But how he was entertained for this by the most eminent Doctors of the Church of his age, St. Jerome, St. Austin, and others, we very well know. His obstinacy in this and other erroneous tenets, against the plainest evidence of Scripture and reason, hath placed him in the black catalogue of heretics.

And it is pity that amongst the reformed foreign Divines, there should be any found that should dare to patronise so exploded an error; especially if we consider the very weak arguments by which they endeavour to justify their dissent from the Catholic Church. To the brief examination of which arguments, we are in the next place to proceed.

1. They say they cannot conceive how this doctrine can be maintained, without admitting with the Papists the merit of good works. For if, as our labour is greater or lesser in God's service here, our reward shall be greater or lesser in the life to come; then there is a proportion observed between our labour or work, and the reward. And this necessarily infers the merit of our work or labour.

I answer, That this objection is founded on a plain mistake of the doctrine of Scripture, which we defend. For when we say with the Holy Scriptures, that every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour, we do not mean, that there will be an exact proportion between a man's labour and his reward; for it is certain, that the highest degree of grace can never equal the lowest degree of glory, nor can the best of saints, by all that he can do, deserve so much as to be a door-keeper in the house of His heavenly Father; but the proportion here is between the work and reward of one good man, compared with the work and reward of another; and in this comparison the proportion is exact.

A very learned Father of our Church explains this by an apposite similitude, which I shall give you as near as may be in his own words translated. "Suppose," saith he, "three husbandmen to be employed in cultivating or dressing the field of some prince, one for one day only, another for three days, the third for six days. Now if the prince, out of his royal bounty, shall give to the first a thousand talents, to the second three thousand talents, to the third six thousand; it is evident, that the reward is measured out to each of these according to the different measure of their labour: but yet it were ridiculous for a man hence to conclude, that the labour of him that wrought six days deserved six thousand talents, yea, or so much as six talents, yea, or so much as one talent, and so in the rest. After the same manner are we to conceive of the Divine

remuneration. For although we affirm, that God measures out to every man a different degree of glory, according to the different measure of his labour; yet it doth not follow from hence, that between the work and reward of one and the same man there is an equality of proportion; but only that between the different works and rewards of different men there is an equality of proportionality. If, therefore, the work of any man be compared with the reward of the same man, viz. eternal life, we may presently discern an infinite inequality between them; but if the works of different men and the rewards of different men be compared, according to the degrees of eminence in the same life eternal, there will appear an accurate proportionality. And this is to reward every man according to his own labour^f."

I need not say any more in answer to this argument, and shall therefore pass to the next.

2. They thus argue. The future glory of the saints is the purchase of Christ's righteousness, which is alike imputed to all true believers, and they have an equal share therein, and consequently they shall share equally in the future glory.

I answer; The doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, as it hath been too commonly taught and understood, hath been a fruitful mother of many pernicious and dangerous errors in divinity. In this objection, it is supposed, that the righteousness of Christ is so imputed to every believer, that it becomes formally his righteousness, and that upon the sole account thereof he hath a right to the future glory. And if this were true, if Christ's righteousness were thus ours, that righteousness being the most perfect righteousness, nothing less could answer it than the highest reward in heaven; and so indeed it would necessarily follow, that the future glory of all the saints should be alike and equal. But this supposition hath no foundation in Scripture, yea, it is plainly false. And that it is so, if we had no other argument, the very doctrine we are now upon were sufficient to evince. We have proved by very plain texts of Scripture, that there will be a disparity of rewards in the life to come, according to the disparity of men's graces and good works in this life; and from hence we may safely conclude, that the doctrine of those who teach that the perfect

^f Davenant de Just. Act. p. 608.

righteousness of Christ is formally the righteousness of every believer, and that thereupon he hath a right to the highest reward in heaven, is certainly false. Nay, indeed, if that doctrine of their's were true, a consequence would follow, which cannot be uttered without trembling, that every saint shall be equal to Christ in glory; Christ's righteousness being his, and so he having a right to whatsoever that righteousness deserved.

But to answer more directly to the objection, there is nothing more certain, than that the future glory of the saints is the purchase of Christ's righteousness. But how? By the meritorious obedience of Christ, in His life and death, a covenant of grace, mercy, and life eternal, was procured, ratified, and established, between God and the sinful sons of men; the condition of this covenant is "faith working by love," or a faith fruitful of good works; and there is also sufficient grace promised to all that shall heartily seek it for the performance of that condition. It is from this covenant of infinite mercy in Christ Jesus alone, that our imperfect good works have any ordination to so excellent a reward as the future glory; and it is the mercy, the rich mercy, the royal bounty and liberality of God, expressed in the same covenant, that assigns to greater degrees of grace here, greater degrees of glory hereafter. This is the plain truth. But to be short, and to shew the perfect sophistry of this objection, I ask the objectors, Whether they do not acknowledge that the present grace of the saints in this life is as well the purchase of Christ's righteousness, as their future glory? They must, they will, they do confess it. Now then, according to their argument it will follow, that all the saints have equal degrees of grace in this life, because they have an equal share in the righteousness of Christ, by which that grace was purchased; than which assertion nothing can be more notoriously false. This their argument, therefore, is a manifest fallacy.

3. Their last objection is taken from the parable of our Saviour^s, where "the kingdom of heaven," that is, the Church of God, is compared "to a vineyard," the master whereof went out "in the morning to hire labourers, and agreed with them

^s Matt. xx. 1, &c.

for a penny a day." Three hours after, or "at the third hour," he went out and hired more; and so again "at the sixth and ninth hours;" yea, "at the eleventh hour" he did likewise. And when they came all to receive their wages, he gave the last he had hired as much as he had agreed for with the first, viz. every one a penny, neither more nor less. Whence they infer, that the future reward, signified by this penny, shall not be proportioned according to the difference of men's works, but be one and the same to all.

I answer; This parable belongs not at all to the matter in question, seeing the scope of it is to justify God's proceedings in the dispensation of His grace towards the Church of the Jews, and that of the Gentiles; the latter of which was not called till a long time after the former; and though being so much junior to it, yet was made its equal in the benefits and blessings of God's gracious covenant. The Jews were first hired into the vineyard betimes in the morning, in the more early ages of the world, in the days of Abraham, with whom and his posterity God made a special covenant of grace and mercy; and in the after-ages, (which seem to be signified in the parable by the "third," and "sixth," and "ninth" hours,) at such times as the true religion was in danger to fail among them, He by extraordinary means and instruments raised and restored it again; as in the days of Moses and Elias, and after the captivity of Babylon. But the Gentiles were not called into the vineyard till the day was far spent, in the last time and dispensation; (undoubtedly signified in the parable by the "eleventh hour;") and yet these, by the goodness of their heavenly Master, are admitted to the same privileges with the Israelites, and they receive the same reward which was promised to the Jews, with whom the covenant was first made, and who bore the heat of the day, whilst the others stood idle.

This admission of idolatrous Gentiles, upon their conversion to the faith of Christ, unto equal privileges with the Jews, was a great offence to them, and an occasion of hardening many of them in their unbelief and rejection of Christ's Gospel. They would rather quit, than share in the benefits of the Gospel with the Gentiles, whom they so much despised and hated, as if they scorned to go to heaven in their company. This dis-

content of the Jews, at the gracious dispensation of God towards the Gentiles, by the Gospel of Christ in the latter ages, is doubtless signified in the parable by the murmuring of those servants that were first hired into the vineyard, against the equal retribution given to those servants that were hired last of all, mentioned ver. 11, 12. And now what is all this to the purpose of the objectors?

In a word, it may seem strange that any man should fetch a proof out of this chapter for a parity of rewards in the life to come, and that from a parabolical discourse delivered therein, and that manifestly designed to a quite different purpose; when in the very same chapter^h, our Saviour plainly teacheth the contrary doctrine, as I have already undeniably evinced.

The objections against this truth being thus cleared, I shall add only one caution, necessary to prevent the misunderstanding of it, viz. that though there shall be different degrees of glory in the life to come, yet to every saint his own degree shall be a satisfactory beatitude.

To receive those rivers of pleasure that flow from the right hand of God, there will be many vessels, (if I may use the common similitude,) of different sizes and capacities, some greater, some lesser, but all of them shall be filled. This different, but in every one satisfactory perception of the future heavenly bliss, seems to have been typified and represented by the Israelites gathering of manna (that food of heaven) in the wilderness; of which we read, that “he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack: they gathered every man according to his own eatingⁱ.” To explain this as far as we are able, it is to be observed, that although whilst we are in this state of proficiency, and running our race, it be not only lawful, but a laudable ambition and emulation in us, to strive to outstrip and excel each other in virtue, and so to gain the richer prize; yet when our race is finished, and the great *Βραβευτής*, or Judge of it, hath given His award, and passed the decisive sentence, we must not, we shall not contend, but fully acquiesce and rest therein. And then the servant who, having increased his pound but to five more, shall hear his Lord thus pronouncing, *Εὖ ἀγαθὲ δούλε*, “Well done

^h Ver. 23, 26, 27.

ⁱ Exod. xvi. 18.

thou good servant, be thou ruler over five cities:" he, I say, shall be as well pleased and satisfied as the other servant, who, having made a double improvement, shall receive a proportionable reward, and "have authority over ten cities."

Among the blessed in heaven there shall be no discontent or repining, no pride or disdain, no grudging or envy; but there shall be all contentment, all joy, all thankfulness, all love. They that are seated in the higher mansions of glory, shall not look down with contempt on those that are beneath them; nor shall these lift up an envious eye towards the other; but they shall perfectly love and delight in each other; and by an inexpressible union of sublimated clarity, each shall make what the other enjoys his own, and altogether shall make up in different notes one sweet harmonious concert in the praises of God, the Fountain of their bliss. To this purpose is the saying of St. Austin on John xiv. 2, speaking of the different rewards of the blessed in heaven: "It comes to pass through charity, that what each hath is common to all; for thus every man hath it also in himself, when he loves and rejoiceth in, and so enjoys in another, what himself hath not^k."

It is hard indeed for us mortals, whilst we dwell in these houses of clay, and are encumbered with the sinful inclinations and passions of this flesh, to conceive of this, and to comprehend the divine power of exalted love. But let us consider, why may not that be among the saints hereafter, which we are sure is among the holy angels now? In that celestial hierarchy, archangels and angels, cherubims and seraphims, and thrones, and the lower orders of those blessed spirits, disagree not among themselves, though they differ from one another in honour and dignity; but, on the contrary, they perfectly love and delight in each other, and all in their God. And in their several stations, they readily and cheerfully execute the will and pleasure of their great Lord and Master, whose ministers they are; and all together make one family of love and peace, of joy and order, and one harmonious choir, in perfect concert and with ravishing melody, sounding forth the praises of their heavenly King. And thus it shall be with the saints after the

^k Fit quidem per charitatem, ut quod sic enim quisque etiam ipse habet, cum habent singuli, commune sit omnibus: amat in altero quod ipse non habet.

resurrection, when they shall be made *ἰσάγγελοι*, “like unto the angels;” *i. e.* when they shall enjoy the same life immortal which the angels do, and be joined to them, and incorporated into their blessed society.

And now, lastly, to apply this whole discourse: Let us, by what hath been said, be excited and stirred up to a diligent, earnest, and zealous pursuit after an increase of virtue, and a greater proficiency in the ways of righteousness and holiness. Let us shun no labour that comes in our way, and is within our reach and compass, whereby we may glorify God, and do good to others; for we see, the more grace the more glory; and the greater and more industrious our labour in God's service hath been in this life, the greater and more copious and abundant shall our reward be in the life to come. We cannot be truly righteous overmuch, as the slothful world would persuade us; nor can there be any excess or superfluity in virtue, or in the habits and exercises of real piety and charity. How great soever our labour be in the business of religion, none of it shall be lost labour, or “in vain in the Lord.” Every degree of grace which we advance to here, shall raise us a degree higher in the future glory. And all the good works that ever we do, shall be recorded in the faithful register of the divine Omniscience, and not one of them shall be forgotten, or miss of its reward. Oh! that this consideration might often and very deeply enter our thoughts! How would a vigorous sense of this truth awaken and rouse us out of our remissness and negligence in religion, that too often seizeth on us! How would this inspirit and animate us to generous attempts even of heroic virtue, which in this degenerate age are derided, as vain romantic enterprises! How often, at least, would this thought call us from our idle solitude or unprofitable society, to our prayers and devotions! How many precious hours of our time would it rescue and redeem, from being misspent and lost in vanity and folly! How readily should we embrace, yea, how studiously should we seek after, the opportunities of doing good! for indeed every such opportunity is an advantage offered us by the good providence of God, farther to enrich our souls, and to add to our heavenly store and treasure, the only true treasure, that shall never fail, or be taken from us.

In a word, therefore, let us, in the first place, (as I said in the beginning of this discourse,) take care to secure our being in a state of grace; for "it is a folly for him, that is not yet sure of life, to contend for honour¹." And having done this, let us not rest here, but advance more and more in that blessed state, and go on to perfection.

I conclude with the words of St. Peter in the close of this Epistle, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory now and for ever." *Amen.*

¹ Incertis de salute, de gloria minime certandum.

SERMON VIII.

EVERLASTING LIFE HOPED FOR BY GOOD MEN UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT ; AND THAT THE CONSIDERATION OF THE VANITY OF THE PRESENT LIFE IS AN EFFECTUAL MEANS TO MAKE US FIX OUR MINDS UPON THINGS ETERNAL.

PSALM ciii. 15—17.

As for man, his days are as grass : as the flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear Him.

THIS Psalm (confessed by all to be a Psalm of David) is eucharistical throughout: it begins and ends with the most devout and affectionate praises and thanksgivings to Almighty God. For thus the sweet singer of Israel begins the Psalm^a; “Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” And thus he ends the Psalm^b; “Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts; ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure. Bless the Lord, all His works in all places of His dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul.”

The matter of this praise and thanksgiving, contained in the body of the Psalm, is of a very large and wide compass, extending itself to all the benefits bestowed by God upon man. But the divine Psalmist more particularly takes notice of two principal blessings of God, belonging to the faithful, (which are indeed the matter of two great articles of our Christian faith,) “the forgiveness of sin,” and “the life everlasting.” The mercy

^a Ver. 1, 2.

^b Ver. 20—22.

of the forgiveness of sin he celebrates, verse 3. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, Who healeth all thy diseases." And again, in the eighth and following verses, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame: He remembereth that we are dust." The blessing of everlasting life, after this present vain life, he sets forth in the verses which I have chosen for my text.

In which the royal Psalmist suggests to us a twofold meditation. 1. Of the vanity and shortness of this present life, and all the enjoyments thereof: "As for man, his days are as grass: as the flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof knoweth it no more." 2. Of the everlasting mercy of God to the faithful in the other life: "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him." For the everlasting mercy of God here spoken of, being opposed to the short transitory enjoyments of this present life, must necessarily signify the mercy and goodness of God to the faithful in the other life, which indeed is the only everlasting mercy. Hence Aben Ezra, and other of the Hebrew Doctors, saw and acknowledged that this text speaks of the everlasting happiness of the righteous in the life to come. And the Chaldee paraphrast thus renders the latter part of my text: "But the mercy of the Lord is in this world, and even in the world to come, upon them that fear Him."

The text thus briefly explained, yields us these two observations, which shall be the subject of my discourse at this time. 1. That good men, even under the Law, or Old Testament, looked beyond this present, vain, transitory life, and believed and hoped for an everlasting happiness in the life to come.

כִּן עֲלֵמָא וְעַד עֲלֵמָא דְּאַתִּי עַל דְּחֵלּוּי

2. That a serious consideration of the vanity and shortness of this present life, and all the enjoyments thereof, is an effectual means to bring us to God, and to make us fix our hopes on Him, and things eternal.

1. That good men, even under the Law, or Old Testament, looked beyond this present, vain, transitory life, and believed and hoped for an everlasting happiness in the life to come. For such a faith and hope, you see, David plainly expresseth in this text, and the same he often elsewhere declares in this divine Book of Psalms. Indeed, in all those places, wherein he shews the vanity and shortness of this life, and that there is no solid, substantial, and stable happiness to be found here below; and yet, with the same breath, sets forth the great happiness of the faithful, in their trust and dependence on God's goodness and mercy; I say, in all those places he evidently points his finger towards heaven, and directs our thoughts to the bliss and happiness of a future state. You may especially find it in Psalm xxxix. 5—7. "Behold, Thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before Thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in Thee."

To the same purpose are those Psalms of David, wherein he amply describes the prosperous and flourishing estate of many wicked men; and, on the other side, the calamitous and afflicted condition of many good and virtuous in this world; and yet in the close pronounceth these to be most happy men, and the other to be most miserable; which cannot be true, but on supposition of a future state and resurrection. Of this sort are the forty-ninth and seventy-third Psalms throughout.

But what need we search far into the Book of Psalms? The very first Psalm affords us a clear proof of this truth. For therein David first shews the blessedness of the godly man in the first and following verses: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he

meditate day and night," &c. And then, on the contrary, he declares the miserable condition of the ungodly^d, "The ungodly are not so:" (*i. e.* they are not blessed as the righteous, but are indeed very miserable men:) "they are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore," or because, "the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous."

Now what judgment or tribunal of God is that, to which all the ungodly shall be cited, in which none of them shall be able to stand? *i. e.* to carry their cause, but they shall all, *causa cadere*, "be cast, and utterly overthrown?" Certainly this cannot be understood of any judgment of God exercised in this life. For here wicked men often prosper, and go out of the world without any discernible mark of God's judgment on them. And, on the other side, many good men, as to the things of this world, are cast and overthrown, ruined and undone. David, therefore, undoubtedly speaks of a "judgment to come." And accordingly, the author of the Targum, or Chaldee Paraphrase, thus renders the words, "The ungodly shall not be justified in the great day^e." The great day, *i. e.* the day of the last judgment, the day of the great assize, wherein all men shall receive their final doom and sentence, called by St. Peter "the day of the Lord^f." Again, what is that "congregation of the righteous," wherein "no sinner shall appear?" Surely there neither is, nor ever was, nor ever will be, any such unmixed company of righteous men to be found in this world. Here the chaff and the wheat, the good and bad, are mingled together; but a winnowing time of judgment will come, wherein "the wicked shall be as the chaff which the wind driveth away," (as the Psalmist expresseth it,) and nothing but the pure and clean wheat shall remain, and be laid up in God's granary. There shall then (as our Saviour assures us) be a congregation or gathering together, from one end of the heavens to the other, of all God's elect, who have been from the beginning of the world; which being placed at the right hand of the Judge, shall receive that joyful sentence, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared

^d Ver. 4, 5.^e 2 Pet. iii. 10.

לֹא יִזְכֶּן רְשָׁעִי בְּיוֹצֵא רַבָּא

for you from the foundation of the world." In this congregation of the righteous, no sinner shall be found: the ungodly shall be placed altogether in another herd, at the Judge's left hand, and hear that dreadful sentence, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." This is the clear sense of those words of the Psalmist, "The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." And by these texts it is evident, that David believed a future state and a judgment to come.

Nor was this faith peculiar to David, but a received notion among the Jews, in the time and age wherein David lived. For it appears that the Jews then generally believed the immortality and subsistence of the soul of man after the death of the body, and consequently a future state of happiness or misery, according to the works and actions of men in this life respectively. This, I say, appears (if we had no other evidence of it) from the history of Saul, desiring to consult the Prophet Samuel after he was dead^g. For that history (which way soever you determine the old dispute, whether it was indeed the soul of Samuel that gave him answer, or an evil spirit personating the holy Prophet) undeniably proves that Saul (as little true religion as he had, yet) believed that the soul of Samuel was still in being, and alive, after his body was dead and laid in the grave; from whence it is plain, that the doctrine of the soul's immortality was no news to the men of that age.

In the writings of King Solomon, the son of David, we find some very clear declarations of the immortality of man's soul, and of a future state. Such is that in the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes^h; "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave itⁱ." The plain and evident sense of which words, is this: Whereas man consists of two parts, body and soul, the condition of these two when he dies will be very different: for the body being first taken out of the dust of the earth, and so of a corruptible constitution, shall go back into the earth again, and moulder into

^g 1 Sam. xxviii. 11, and following verses.

^h Ver. 7.

ⁱ [See Note at p. 22.]

dust; but the soul, as it is of another and more noble original, (as being at first breathed immediately from God Himself into the body, shall not perish with the body, but return to God and the regions above. For Solomon seems to speak of the end of man, according to God's primary and antecedent will and intention; which was, "that the soul of man after death, should go to God and the heavenly beings; and not of the consequent event of things happening through men's sin and wickedness: whereby it comes to pass, that the souls of many men, when they die, go to the devil and the infernal regions. Though it is true also, that the spirit of every man after death, good or bad, in some sense goes to God, and returns into His hands, to be kept somewhere under the custody of His almighty power, in order to the receiving of His final sentence at the last judgment, either of life or death eternal. And accordingly the Wise Man, a little after in the same chapter, subjoins the article of the future universal judgment, and that as an argument to persuade men, not to acquiesce in these worldly vanities, but to make religion and the service of God their chief design and business^k; "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole [duty] of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." This was Solomon's faith.

Let us proceed to the following ages. After these times it pleased the good and gracious God, to afford His people a mighty and most convincing evidence of the future heavenly and immortal life, in the translation of Elias, of which you read 2 Kings ii. 11, 12, that he was taken up by God in "a fiery chariot into heaven," and that in the sight of Elisha, who afterwards saw him no more. And this was left upon record, so that none of the Jews who read the history could be ignorant of this wonderful work of God.

In the writings of the succeeding Prophets, there are many passages, which an equal and unprejudiced reader cannot but believe have a prospect to the life to come. But because they are liable to some cavils and exceptions, (occasioned by the obscurity of the Prophetic style,) which I have not now time to

^k Ver. 13, 14.

consider, I shall at present wave them, and proceed to some other instances.

In the time of the captivity lived the penman of the 102d Psalm, as clearly appears from the thirteenth and following verses; and he is thought by some learned interpreters to have been Nchemiah. But whoever was the writer of the Psalm, we have therein a very remarkable passage to our purpose in the twenty-fifth and following verses: "Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed." Here it is most plainly asserted, that as the heavens and the earth were at first created and made by the almighty power of God, so by the same power they shall one day, as to their present constitution, perish and be dissolved; and that a change or new state of things shall ensue.

Now what is this, I beseech you, but the very doctrine of St. Peter concerning the last day of judgmentⁿ; "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and all the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Certainly the end or dissolution of this present world, and a future state or world to come, have a necessary connection one with the other, and are both alike matters of divine revelation. Nor can it be imagined why, and to what purpose, the former should be revealed to the sons of men without the latter. But besides, as I have already noted, the words of the Psalmist expressly speak of a "change" of things at the end and dissolution of this present world; such a change, as when a man puts off, folds up, and lays aside an old garment, and puts on a new and fresh one.

I shall only farther remark here, that the ancient oracles attributed to the Sibyls, extant before our Saviour's time, (which in great part had their original from the Jewish theology,)

spake also of the last great conflagration, or dissolution of this present world. For so Ovid testifieth,

Esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur affore tempus,
Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia cœli
Ardeat, et mundi moles operosa laboret. [MET. I. 256.]

That in them there was mention of a time appointed by the Divine decree, wherein heaven and earth should be all on fire, and the vast fabric of this world should sink in the flames thereof.

My next instance shall be taken from the book entitled, *The Wisdom of Solomon*; which, though it be not canonical, is yet an ancient and venerable writing, undoubtedly extant before our Saviour's time, and is a competent and sufficient witness of the faith and belief of the Church in the time wherein it was written. In the second chapter of that book, from the first to the twentieth verse inclusively, the author elegantly represents the base and vile sentiments of ungodly infidels, concerning the life to come. And then in the four last verses of the same chapter, and the four first verses of the following chapter, against that wicked doctrine, he opposeth the Catholic truth, received and believed by the Church of God in his time, in these words: "Such things they did imagine, and were deceived: for their own wickedness hath blinded them. As for the mysteries of God, they knew them not: neither hoped they for the wages of the righteous: nor discerned a reward for blameless souls. For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world: and they that hold of his side do find it. But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise, they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality."

My last instance shall be in those Old Testament Martyrs, that matchless woman and her seven sons, who, for adhering to the law of God, suffered under the impious merciless tyrant Antiochus; whose history you may read in the seventh chapter

of the second book of Maccabees. What exquisite torments did they suffer with the greatest courage, in hope of a blessed resurrection, which they all openly professed to the face of the tyrant! How did they scorn the offer of life and honour too, upon their compliance with the sinful terms proposed to them! But the words of the last of the seven sons, speaking of his brethren that died before him, are express, and most remarkable^o; “Our brethren, which now have suffered a short pain, are dead under God’s covenant of everlasting life.” I scarce know where to find an instance of greater faith and fortitude in any of our Christian martyrologies. And as to the truth of the history, it was never questioned in the Jewish Church, as appears from Josephus and their other writers. And it is moreover confirmed by the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who manifestly refers to it^p, where, discoursing of the faith and patience of the saints before Christ, he mentions some “who were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might receive a better resurrection.”

By these testimonies and instances, it sufficiently appears, that good men under the Law did not live and die like swine, feeding only on the husks of these earthly vanities, as some have foolishly imagined. They had undoubtedly a future state in their eye, and lived by the faith of it, as well as we. This faith was first derived, not from the law of Moses, (for that in the letter of it promised nothing beyond this life,) but from the gracious revelation of God to mankind from the beginning. For the clearing whereof we are to remember, what the author of the Book of Wisdom in the place before cited tells us, and the Church of God always believed; viz. that “God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity;” and that “through the envy of the devil death entered into the world^q.” That is, that our first parents in paradise were designed to a life immortal, if they had not sinned. And indeed in the history of Genesis we expressly read, that they were forbidden only “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” being freely allowed to eat of all the other trees, “the tree of life” not excepted. Which doubtless was

^o Ver. 36.

^p Chap. xi. 35.

^q Wisdom ii. 23, 24.

so called, because it was either a symbol and sacrament, or an instrument or means of immortality, or both. And we there read also, that "death was threatened to our first parents, as a punishment to them if they should transgress the command of God given them." Which evidently implies, that if they had not sinned, they should not have died. Indeed, how could they understand the sanction otherwise, and what force could it have had on them to deter them from sinning, if they had thought they should have died, whether they had sinned or not? And therefore St. Paul expressly teacheth us, "that by the sin of the first man" (and no otherwise) "death entered into the world," in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and in other places.

By his sin, then, Adam lost paradise, and that whereof it was a figure, heaven too. He was debarred from the sacrament of immortality, the sentence of death being passed upon him. But was he utterly left in this sad estate, without hope of recovery? The Church of God hath always believed that he repented, and laid hold on the mercy of a second covenant, and was received again into Divine favour; although there be no express mention of this in his history. Thus, we do not read of any precept or law given by God to Adam after his fall, but we find the practice of sacrificing in his family. And it will be very difficult to him that considers the matter thoroughly to imagine, that he invented that rite of his own head; he was taught it, therefore, by the command and institution of God. And it is highly reasonable to think, that at the same time, when God gave a second law and institution, he encouraged him also to the obedience of it, by a promise of acceptance and restitution to his former favour. Upon this hope, doubtless, he renewed his allegiance to his Creator, and devoted himself to the worship and service of God, and taught his sons, Cain and Abel, to do so likewise. From him they learned to present their several offerings to the Lord, Gen. iv.; where we read also, ver. 4, 5, that "God had respect to Abel's offering," and declared His acceptance of it by some visible sign, taken notice of by his brother Cain; probably, as the Hebrew doctors tell us, "by a fire from heaven, inflaming his offering." But how was Abel's offering accepted by God? Surely not to the obtain-

ing of any of the temporal blessings or good things of this life; for, on the contrary, for this very sacrifice which he offered to God, he soon became himself a sacrifice to the envy and malice of his wicked brother. Abel, therefore, and his offering, were accepted by God to the purposes of salvation, and the obtaining of the good things of the life to come. And as he was the first martyr for righteousness' sake, that is, upon the account that he was more righteous than his brother; so he was the first saint that entered the heavenly paradise.

Moreover, it is certain that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, spake of a life to come and a future judgment. For St. Jude assures us^t, that he expressly prophesied, that "God should come with ten thousand of his saints," or angels, "to judge all that are ungodly." And the same Enoch, as he was a preacher of the life to come, so he was an illustrious precedent or example thereof. For we read^u, that "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him;" *i. e.* God took him out of this world, to the happiness above, to the bliss of paradise. And the author of Ecclesiasticus^x, tells us, that "Enoch pleased God, and was translated, being an example of repentance to future generations." What God did to Enoch was exemplary, and taught all future generations what they might expect from God, if they walked with Him as Enoch did. So that the translation of Enoch to heaven was a seal and confirmation of the doctrine of a life to come, which he had preached to men while he was here on earth.

St. Paul seems plainly to confirm all that hath been said in his Epistle to Titus^y, where he tells us, that "eternal life was promised by God that cannot lie," *πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων*, that is, (not "before the foundation of the world," as our translators render it^z, for there were then no men to whom such promise might be made, but) "before ancient times," as the words will bear, or from the beginning of the world. This promise was made to Adam in paradise; this promise was renewed to mankind presently after the fall; it was believed by Adam and his sons; it was preached, published, yea, and exemplified by

^t Ver. 14, 15. of his Epistle.

^u Gen. v. 24.

^x Chap. xlv. 16.

^y Chap. i. 2.

^z [This is a mistake: our translation has "before the world began."]

Enoch. By the faith of this promise, the Patriarchs did and suffered great things, as the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews excellently reasons^a. This promise continued in force under the Law, and was not made of no effect by it; and this same promise is now most fully revealed, ratified, established, and confirmed to us by the Gospel of Christ.

In a word, the doctrine of a future life and judgment, continued inviolate and unquestioned among the Jews, till after their return from the captivity. After which time, (exactly how soon, or how long after, seems to me uncertain,) there arose the heresy of the Sadducees, who believed neither the immortality of the soul, nor the resurrection of the body, nor the judgment to come. But concerning these Josephus observes^b, that “though they were generally rich and great men,” (their principles leading them to mind and seek after the riches and honours of this world,) “yet they were very few in number, compared to the rest of the Jews.” And accordingly we read, that when our blessed Lord had refuted their wicked doctrine out of the Pentateuch, or books of Moses, which they themselves acknowledged, the multitude, as adhering to the old catholic faith, applauded His discourse^c. The same Josephus also tells us, “That when any of the Sadducees were admitted to offices of public trust and government, they were forced to dissemble their faith, or rather infidelity, and to subscribe to the received doctrine of the Church of the Jews, because otherwise the people would by no means have endured them.”

I shall only by the way farther add, what divers Hebrew writers of good note have related as a certain and known truth, that several of that impious sect, being gotten into the Pontifical office, when they were about to enter the sanctuary, were, like Nadab and Abihu, smitten by the hand of God, a flame of fire issuing forth from between the cherubims that covered the ark, and destroying them upon the spot. A just and suitable judgment upon those profane wretches, who durst approach that type of heaven, whilst in their hearts they derided the antitype, believing no other heaven but what is here on earth, and scoffing at the resurrection and future judgment, without

^a Chap. xi.^c Matt. xxii. 33.^b Antiq. Judaicæ, xviii. 2.

the belief whereof, there can be no serious and hearty worship or service of God.

And thus, I hope, I have sufficiently cleared and confirmed my first observation from the text, that good men, under the Law or Old Testament, looked beyond this present vain and transitory life, and believed and hoped for an everlasting happiness in the life to come.

Now this discourse serves to confirm the truth of the Christian religion, and our belief of it. The great promise of the Gospel, is of a happy life hereafter to them that live virtuously here. That this promise is not delusory, no new fiction, or vain suggestion of Christ and His Apostles, is sufficiently evident from the suffrage of the Church of God before our Saviour's time, and from the beginning. We may say of this promise of a future life, as St. John doth of the Evangelical precept of love, that it is a new commandment, and yet no new one, but an old one, delivered from the beginning^c. So this promise of a future happiness to the righteous, the chief part of that good tidings which the Gospel brings us, is a new promise, and yet not new, but an old one. New it is in respect of its clearer discovery and fuller confirmation by Christ; and yet not new, because this promise was given from the beginning, and good men in the Church of God had always the same kind of hope that we have. In the Church of God, did I say? Nay, there is no people so barbarous but have had some notion of a life to come, this divine revelation being delivered from the beginning, preserved till the flood, and, after the dispersion of the sons of Noah, conveyed by them to the several nations descending from them; though the doctrine (as all things intrusted to mere tradition used to be) was corrupted in the conveyance.

When therefore we Christians deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, out of an hope to be rewarded in a state remaining after this life, we venture in the same bottom that all good men of all nations have done before us. But God be thanked, if this notion had never been heard of in the world before our Saviour's coming, yet He alone hath brought with Him such an assur-

^c 1 John ii. 7, and following verses.

ance of it, that there remains no place of doubting to any reasonable and unprejudiced person ; even by His own most glorious resurrection and ascension, abundantly attested to us, by the constant sufferings of the many eye-witnesses thereof, upon the account of that very testimony ; and by very many unparalleled miracles wrought by them and their successors a long time after them ; whereby, indeed, the whole Gospel of Christ is clearly evidenced. I conclude this with St. Paul's exhortation^d : " Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

And so I pass to the other observation from my text, which I shall despatch in a word or two, and so conclude.

2. That a serious consideration of the vanity and shortness of this present life, and all the enjoyments thereof, is an effectual means to bring us to God, and to make us fix our hopes on Him and things eternal.

For thus it wrought with David here, who after he had considered the vanity of this world in these words, " As for man, his days are as grass : as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. The wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more ;" he presently directs his thoughts to heaven in the following words, " But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him."

If therefore we would have our hearts brought off to God, and the serious pursuit of eternal things, let us daily study the vanity of this world. Study it, did I say ? There seems little need of study, or deep search into this matter. This is a thing that thrusts itself upon our thoughts, so that we must think of it, unless we thrust it from us.

This lesson of the world's vanity, Divine Providence doth press and inculcate on us, and, as it were, beat into us. We daily see the vicissitudes of human affairs. We continually hear of the losses, troubles, or calamities, of friends or strangers. Yea, ever and anon some cross accident or other befalls ourselves, to let us know that our happiness lies not here. We are daily accosted with spectacles of mortality, and, as our Church expresseth it, " in the midst of life we are in death."

^d 1 Cor. xv. 58.

* Alas! that in the midst of so many remembrancers wherewith Providence hath surrounded us, we should, with the monarch in story, need another monitor to tell us every day, "Remember that thou art mortal!" And yet this is our case. What fatal stupidity is it that hath seized on us? Hath the frequency of these admonitions made them to lose their force and virtue on us? or rather, are we affectedly ignorant, and do we wilfully put the evil day far from us? Whatever the cause be, the effect is sadly visible.

The time will shortly come, when we shall all perfectly understand (if we have any understanding left in us) the vanity of this world, when perhaps it will be too late for us to be the better for that knowledge, too late to mend our fortunes, (if I may so speak,) or to secure ourselves a happier condition in another world: I mean, when the world shall take its leave of us, and we of it, when we come to die. Then the worldling himself shall be out of love with this world, yea, perfectly hate it, and be angry and vexed to find himself so miserably deluded and cheated by it. When all his treasures shall not be able to redeem his life from death; when all his vain and sinful delights and pleasures shall utterly forsake him, and leave nothing behind but a bitter remembrance of them; when pain, anguish, and sorrow, shall take hold of him; when his soft bed shall give him no ease, nor his luxurious table afford him one morsel of food or sustenance; when his friends (if he have any) shall stand weeping about him, but not be able to help him; when his very life and breath shall begin to fail him; especially when (if his conscience be awakened) he shall see that dismal state of things that expects him in the other world, "an angry and an Almighty God too, bending His bow," (as the Psalmist elegantly describes it,) "and making ready His arrows, and whetting His glittering sword of vengeance against him:" those bailiffs of the Divine justice, the devils, waiting to arrest his soul, and carry it to that prison from whence there is no redemption; and, in a word, hell itself opening her mouth wide to devour him. Then, then he will acknowledge that to be most true, which he had been often told before by the wise, but would not be convinced of it; that to trust to any thing in this

world is a perfect folly, to neglect God and eternal things a very madness, and that religion and the fear of God is the only true wisdom. Then he will confess, that one spark of true virtue and grace in the heart, one soft whisper of a good conscience, one glimpse of the light of God's countenance, is more to be valued than this whole world.

But it were to be wished we would understand the vanity of this world at a cheaper rate, and as becomes wise men, by foresight and consideration, and not learn it only from that mistress of fools, sad experience. Yea, let us anticipate and be beforehand with this perfidious world, by breaking off our league with it before it thus miserably disappoints us. Let us now, presently, (if we have not before done it,) entirely devote and give up ourselves to the service of God, and the serious pursuit of eternal things. Let us renew our Baptismal vow, and once again in good earnest renounce the world, with all its vanities. And let us do this seasonably, and in due time, whilst we may be accepted of God, whilst we are in such circumstances, that our abandoning the vanities of this world, and the devotion of our hearts and affections to God and heavenly things, may be accounted a free-will offering, and not be a matter of mere constraint and necessity. For "let us not deceive ourselves, God is not mocked," He will not accept of the world's leavings.

The ever-blessed God, the Fountain of all happiness, the Chief Good of man, the most excellent and desirable Being, out of His infinite grace and goodness, from time to time calls upon us, in the ministry of His word and by His providence, to take off our hearts from the things of this world, and offers Himself to our acceptance, and even courts us (O infinite condescension!) to be happy, for ever happy, in the enjoyment of Him. Now, if after all this, we still cleave to the lusts and vanities of this world, and prefer them before God the Creator, blessed for ever, and that even to the last, till death is just ready to hale us off from the world, and we can enjoy it no longer; how can we expect, or so much as imagine, that God will bear this affront at our hands, this vile contempt of His most glorious Majesty, or ever receive us into His grace and favour?

Let us therefore now, in the day of our health and prosperity,

in the midst of the enjoyments of this life, whilst the world smiles on us, and tempts us with its alluring vanities, take off our hearts from it, despise it, and live above it, and heartily choose God for our portion, and “set our affections on the things which are above.” And then we may be secure, we may depend upon it, that in the day of our distress, even in the hour of death, God will be our God, to stand by us, and to support and comfort us. And the light of His countenance shall make even “the valley of the shadow of death” bright and lightsome to us. And after death, we shall be received into those regions of bliss, where we shall see and enjoy things “that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.” To which blessed state, God of His infinite mercy bring us all in His due time, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

To Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON IX.^a

WHAT THAT WORTHINESS IS, AND WHEREIN IT CONSISTS, WHICH IS
REQUIRED OF THOSE THAT SHALL BE PARTAKERS OF THE FUTURE
HEAVENLY GLORY.

REV. iii. 4.

And they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.

THE whole verse runs thus: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy."

My text is part of the epistle or letter of our blessed Saviour, dictated to and sent by St. John, His Apostle, to the Angel or Bishop of the Church of Sardis. Wherein our Lord severely reprimands that Bishop (and, as it appears, the generality of the Church under his government) for great corruptions, both in doctrine and manners, which they were guilty of^b. But in the verse out of which my text is taken, our Saviour takes notice of some few in that very Church, who had kept themselves pure and free from the general and prevailing corruptions of it: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments." A few names, *i. e.* a few persons; so the word *ὀνόματα*, "names," is used Acts i. 15, and in other places of Scripture.

In the greatest corruptions of the Church, God's grace always reserves some few, that retain their integrity. Thus in Isaiah's time, when the people of the Jews were generally become so vile, that the Prophet, speaking to them and their magistrates, calls them "rulers over Sodom and people of Gomorrah;" yet even then God had left to Himself a small remnant of good men, for whose sake the city of Jerusalem,

^a [From a passage in this Sermon been written not long after 1688.]
concerning the prospect of persecution ^b Ver. 1—3.
being removed, it would seem to have

though as wicked as Sodom, was not destroyed as Sodom was, with a final and utter destruction^c. When the Church of the Jews was so overwhelmed with idolatry, that good Elias thought himself the only man that stuck to the worship and service of the true God; yet even then the Lord could tell him, "Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him^d." In that exceeding numerous and populous nation, there were but seven thousand that adhered to the God of their fathers, just so many, and not one more. In general corruptions, when those few good men that are left are hid, and seem, as it were, to be lost and swallowed up in the vast multitude of the wicked; yet even then, the all-seeing eye of God finds them out, and not a man of them escapes His gracious and favourable notice; and as the expression of our Lord, concerning those few good men in the degenerate Church of Sardis, imports, He knows them all by name, "Thou hast a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments." Those names the Lord so knew and took notice of, as to write them in His book of life, for so it follows in the text: "And they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy."

They shall walk with Me *ἐν λευκοῖς*, "in white" or bright "garments." As they walked before Me in the pure and clean garments of sanctity and holiness in this life, so shall they walk with Me in bright garments of glory in the life to come. "Thou hast a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with Me in white." It is a metaphorical expression frequently used in this book of the Revelation, to set forth the heavenly glory, which the saints shall be partakers of in the future state. So, to look no farther, it is used in the verse next to my text^e; "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."

This is the promise of our Saviour to the good men of the Church of Sardis, and in them to all sincere and faithful

^c Isaiah i. 9, 10.

^e Ver. 5.

^d 1 Kings xix. 18.

Christians. The reason of the promise follows in the next words of my text, *ὅτι ἄξιοί εἰσι*, “for they are worthy.” And upon this part of the text, I shall insist in my following discourse.

“For they are worthy.” Let no man startle at the expression, for to be sure there is no hurt in it, it being the language of the Holy Ghost; and when we have thoroughly inquired into it, it will be found pregnant of matter, tending very much both to the glory of God, and the instruction, yea, and comfort too, of all sincere Christians. In the mean time, from the plain words of the text, we may venture to lay down this proposition as an undoubted truth:

There is a certain worthiness required in those, that shall be partakers of the future heavenly glory.

The text is express, and there are many other places of Scripture that speak as expressly to the same purpose. So again our Saviour Himself^f, *οἱ καταξιοθέντες*, “They who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage.” And^g, “Watch ye, therefore, and pray, *ἵνα καταξιωθῇτε*, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.” So^h, “That ye may be accounted worthy of the Kingdom of God.” Where the Greek word is the same as in the former texts. From these testimonies of Scripture, (to which divers others might be added,) it is evident, that there is a certain worthiness required in those, that shall be partakers of the heavenly glory. Now my business at present shall be carefully to inquire, what this worthiness is, and wherein it consists.

1. And first negatively, It is not, cannot be a worthiness of condignity or proper merit that is meant, as the Doctors of the Church of Rome generally understand by the texts alleged.

Some of these men have not trembled to affirm, that their good works are worthy of the heavenly glory, in strict justice, without any respect at all to the covenant and promise of God. Others of them assert, that the good works of the regenerate, being performed by the assistance of the Divine Spirit, bear a

^f Luke xx. 35.
^g Chap. xxi. 36.

^h 2 Thess. i. 5.

just proportion to the heavenly glory; and need the promise of God to make them deserve it only upon this account, because God is not bound to accept our good works to eternal life, though they be commensurate, and in value equal thereunto, unless He bind Himself by agreement so to do: just as a man is not bound to part with a piece of land of his own to another that offers him a full price for it, unless by his consent he makes it a bargain; which is the general opinion of the Romanists, and which Bellarminⁱ maintains, as undoubtedly agreeable to the decree of the Council of Trent.

This is a horrid doctrine, and not to be endured in the Church of Christ. Such a worthiness of condignity, and proper merit of the heavenly glory, cannot be found in any the best, most perfect, and excellent of created beings, much less in any of the sons of fallen and sinful man. For what is the worthiness, what are the good works, of the best of us? Works imperfectly good, mixed with human frailty and infirmity in the doing of them; interrupted with sins of daily incursion, so that even they who can call God their Father, are in the Lord's Prayer taught every day to pray for the "forgiveness of their trespasses," as duly as they pray for their "daily bread." And then they are the works (suppose them never so perfect) of a very short life here on earth, and that generally of a little scantling of that short life; most of us having sinned, or trifled away, the best and greatest part of our life, before we had well learned the art of living well; and in that part of our lives committed such sins, as all our after-piety, were it far greater than it is, can never of itself sufficiently expiate. And after all this, we are beholden for all the good which we do, to the free grace of God exciting us to do it, and assisting us and our endeavours in the doing of it; so that our good works are the gifts and graces of God. Well, this is our worthiness, these are our good works.

Now what is that future glory and happiness we profess to hope for? An astonishing happiness, no less than the vision and everlasting fruition of God Himself, blessed for ever. And is it possible for any man, yea, any angel or created being, by any thing that he can do, to merit such a glory as this? Is it

ⁱ De Justif. v. 17. [vol. iv. ed. 1608.]

possible for the creature to deserve the Creator, and the everlasting possession and enjoyment of Him? Certainly no; nothing but the infinite goodness and condescension of God the Creator can be assigned as the cause or reason, why any the best of creatures should be advanced to such an amazing felicity and happiness. And as for us sinful men, we having by our sins put a bar to the Divine goodness, nothing could (or at least God had for very good reasons decreed that nothing should) remove that bar, and make way for the free current of His heavenly bounty to descend upon us, but the meritorious satisfaction of the Son of God, made man, and dying for us. It is impossible, therefore, for so transcendent a glory to fall under the merit of the best of creatures, much more of fallen and sinful man. And so much for the negative.

2. Affirmatively, The worthiness required in those that shall be partakers of the heavenly glory, is only a worthiness of meetness, fitness, or due disposition to receive it; and this wrought in us by the grace, and accepted through the mercy, of the Gospel covenant, procured, ratified, and confirmed by the meritorious obedience and sufferings of the Son of God, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For though there be no just proportion, but, on the contrary, there must needs be a vast inconceivable disproportion, between our good works and the eternal happiness which God by way of recompense bestows on them; yet there must be, and is, some kind of agreeableness and suitableness between our works and that recompense. Our obedience to God ought to be such, as that it may have, though not a merit of condignity to deserve everlasting bliss, (that being, as I have shewn you, utterly impossible,) yet an ordinability, (as a great Doctor of our Church expresseth it,) *i. e.* a meetness, fitness, and due disposition toward the obtaining of it. This is the manifest purpose of the texts alleged, and all others which speak of any worthiness in us of the heavenly glory. And in this sense the word *ἄξιος*, “worthy,” is often used in Scripture in other cases. So^k, our Saviour sendeth forth His twelve Apostles to preach His Gospel in the several parts of Palestine; and among other directions He gives them, this is one^l; “Into whatsoever city or town ye shall

^k Matt. x.^l Ver. 11—13.

enter, inquire who in it is 'worthy:' and there abide till ye go thence; and if the house or family be ἀξία 'worthy,' let your peace be upon it^m." Where it is plain, that by worthy persons and families, are meant such as by an humble, docible temper, and other good inclinations, were prepared, fitted, and disposed to receive the divine doctrines and precepts of the Gospel with effect.

In the same sense as the famous Gallican Bishop and Martyr, Potlinus, in Eusebiusⁿ, being asked by the Roman president "who or what the God of the Christians was?" answered, "If thou wert worthy, thou shouldest know^o;" *i. e.* If thou wert fit to receive so sublime a mystery, I would declare it to thee. So here then a man is said to be worthy of the heavenly glory, (that glory which infinitely transcends the merits of the best of creatures,) when he is fit, duly qualified, and disposed to receive it from the Divine mercy; when he is such as the infinite goodness of God may bestow heaven on, saving the honour of His wisdom, righteousness, and holiness.

And accordingly, St. Paul, who requires from the Thessalonians, in the place before cited, that they be "counted worthy of the kingdom of God," explains himselfⁿ, "Giving thanks to the Father," τῷ ἱκανώσαντι ἡμᾶς, "Who hath made us fit, or meet, to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." For so ἱκανοῦν signifies, as appears from 2 Cor. iii. 6, where our translators indeed have it, "who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament;" but in the Greek it is ὁς ἱκανώσεν ἡμᾶς, "who hath made us meet, or fit, to be ministers of the New Testament."

Thus in general you see, that the worthiness required in those that shall be partakers of the heavenly glory, is not a worthiness of condignity or merit, but only a worthiness of meetness or fitness for it.

Now here it must be farther and more particularly inquired, wherein this worthiness of meetness, fitness, or due disposition for the heavenly glory consists, and what, in its true notion, it comprehends? I answer, it comprehends these following particulars.

^m Τίς ἐν αὐτῇ ἀξίως ἐστίν.

ⁿ Eccl. Hist. v. 1.

^o Ἐὰν ᾗς ἀξίως, γνώσῃ.

^p Cel. i. 12.

1. A steadfast belief and persuasion of the certainty of the future glory. This must be presupposed and laid as a foundation, before we can in good earnest so much as attempt any thing in religion. For "he that cometh to God must believe," not only "that God is," but also "that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him^a." A rewarder of them, not so much in this life, as in that which is to come. For here good and virtuous men do oftentimes suffer many and great evils, and that upon the very account of their virtue.

Indeed some kind of belief of a life to come, hath obtained in all ages and all nations of the world, even in those which in almost all other respects have become barbarous. From whence we may justly conclude, that the notion of a future state is either a dictate of the common reason of mankind, or a part of that primitive divine revelation, which God gave to the first men, and was from them derived down to all their posterity; or else that it is the product and effect of both. Yet perhaps this general belief might, with some appearance of reason, have been suspected as a vulgar error, had not the Son of God Himself come down from heaven to attest it, as a very great and most certain truth.

But now He hath "brought life and immortality" into the clearest "light by His Gospel," wherein are many repeated, plain, and express promises of an inexpressible eternal felicity and happiness, to be bestowed on all such as believe in Him, and sincerely obey Him. And these promises which He hath made to us, He hath, as it were, exemplified and fulfilled in Himself, by raising Himself from the dead, and ascending into the heavenly glory; that His resurrection and ascension being attested by unexceptionable witnesses, who could not possibly, (all things considered,) either be deceived themselves, or go about to deceive others in what they testified.

In a word, our whole Christian faith, whereof the belief of a life to come is a principal part, is through the superabundant goodness of God so ascertained to us, by so very many and so convincing arguments, both external in the undoubted miracles wherewith it was confirmed, and the astonishing way of its propagation, and also internal in the very constitution and frame

^a Heb. xi. 6.

of the religion itself, that I think it impossible (and I speak advisedly) for any sound, honest, and unprejudiced mind, that hath thoroughly weighed and considered them, to withstand their evidence.

So that now, if we do not firmly believe a future state of perfect happiness to the virtuous, and so, on the other side, of extreme misery to the wicked, our infidelity is incurable and unpardonable. That is the first thing which this worthiness comprehends, a steadfast belief and persuasion of the certainty of the future glory.

2. This worthiness of the heavenly glory comprehends a vigorous and lively apprehension and consideration of its transcendent worth and excellency, compared with whatsoever happiness this present life can offer in competition with it. The worthy Christian, beholding those eternal joys that are set before him, looks down with contempt on all the glories and enjoyments of this transitory world, despising them as perfect vanities.

It is not enough for us to believe the happiness of the life to come, unless we also lay it in the balance with all the seeming felicities of this present life, and by frequent and serious consideration both of the one and the other, we at last arrive to this determinate and settled judgment, that heaven is infinitely to be preferred before this earth, solid and eternal joys before empty, temporary, and transient pleasures. This determination one would think to be very easy; but, alas! it is not. For though there can be no dispute, whether an eternal and everlasting, or a temporary and transient good, be to be preferred; yet in this case, the temporary good hath this advantage above the eternal, that the former is present and at hand, the other future and at a distance; and we are more apt to catch at any present and seeming satisfaction of our craving desire after happiness, than to wait with patience for a future one, though we cannot but think it the far greater good. Just as some prodigal heirs, for a little money in hand to serve their present extravagant occasions, sell their inheritance of a far greater value. Or like the profane Esau, who, to gratify a present pungent, languishing appetite, for a mess of pottage parted with his birthright for ever.

Now there is nothing can be a more effectual cure of this folly and madness of ours, than the frequent and serious consideration we are now discoursing of: for this would make things future to be as it were always present with us. Faith itself is an ineffectual virtue, unless it be excited, actuated, and enlivened by this consideration. And I am apt to think, that among those multitudes of professed Christians that perish everlastingly, there are as many, at least, that miscarry for want of a serious consideration of the things they believe, as for want of the belief itself; and that unthinking believers take up a very great room in the regions of darkness. But our worthy Christian lives in the daily meditation of eternity, frequently in his most serious thoughts comparing the future and everlasting state with this present vanishing life.

Thus did St. Paul, and he speaks in the plural number, as joining herein all true believers together with himself; “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” The holy Apostle did not only firmly believe, but also constantly eye and mind the future unseen things, and that so as to compare them with the things that are seen, *i. e.* the things of this present life, considering these as temporal, the other as eternal. And this made him to bear his afflictions, though in themselves very grievous, not only patiently, but even triumphantly; despising them as light, trivial things, scarce worth the speaking of, *i. e.* compared with the future happiness, the reward of them; the excellency whereof he seems to labour for words to express, as terming it, “an inexpressibly exceeding and eternal weight of glory^s.” A heathen philosopher hath excellently comprised all true practical philosophy in two words, “Bear and forbear^t.” Bear pain, forbear pleasure; *i. e.* in more Christian language, Patiently

^r 2 Cor. iv. 16—18.

^s Καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος ὑπέξῃς.

^t Ὑπέχου καὶ ἀπέχου, sustine et abstine. [Ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου.]

endure all afflictions which God sends on thee, and carefully abstain from all sinful pleasures and enjoyments which the law of God forbids thee. These are two very hard things, and indeed impossible to be performed by us, unless through the grace of God we have a constant respect to the future eternal glory, and this indeed will make them both easy to us.

In a word, we shall never be fit for heaven, or in God's gracious account worthy of it, till we have thoroughly learned that lesson, which the wisest of men, Solomon, inculcates on us, in his excellent book of Ecclesiastes. Wherein almost throughout, he admirably represents the perfect vanity of all things under the sun, and thereupon in the close^u, makes this inference; "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Yea, and his whole and entire happiness too. But how doth this follow? you must take in what is presently added^x; "For God shall bring every word into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." He that is fully convinced of these two things, that there is no solid happiness to be found in this world, and that there is a world to come, wherein God will adjudge men to an everlasting state, either of happiness or misery respectively, as they have made their choice and acted here, must necessarily subscribe to the truth of Solomon's conclusion, that true religion is the only way to true happiness. Thus Solomon discoursed even under the Old Testament.

Nor is it any wonder that God's own people, even under that dispensation, had such an apprehension of things, when we find the same notion in the writings of the very heathens. I instance in Seneca, who, out of Plato, comparing the present transient things with things future and eternal, thus excellently discourseth in his 59th Epistle; "All those things which are subject to our senses, and excite and inflame our passions and affections, Plato will not allow to be in the number of those things which truly are or exist. They are but imaginary things, carrying some face and appearance for a while. There is none of them stable, solid, or substantial. And yet we desire them, as if they were always to be and continue, and as if we

^u Chap. xii. 13.

^x Ver. 14.

ourselves were always to enjoy them. But let us direct our minds to things eternal; let us condemn and despise all those things, which are so far from having any true worth in them, that it is disputable whether they have at all any real proper being and existence^y." What could a Christian Divine have said better?

That is the second thing which this worthiness comprehends, viz. a vigorous and lively apprehension and consideration of the transcendent worth and excellency of the heavenly glory, compared with whatsoever happiness this life can offer to us.

3. This worthiness of the future glory comprehends a well-weighed and fixed resolution to part with any thing that is most dear to us in this world, rather than to lose our interest and share in it. This resolution depends indeed upon the former apprehension; but yet it is a distinct thing from it, and deserves a distinct consideration.

Now that this resolution, as also the practice of it, as occasion is offered, is absolutely necessary to render us worthy, *i. e.* to qualify and fit us to be partakers of Christ and His heavenly kingdom, our Lord Himself most plainly and expressly assures us^z; "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."

Christ will not endure a superior, no, nor an equal, in our hearts and affections; He will reign there as our supreme and sovereign Lord, or not at all. If our dearest friends or nearest relations, if our worldly goods and estates, if our temporal life itself be dearer to us than our deservedly dearest Saviour and Redeemer, so as that, when they stand in competition, we choose to quit His service and our duty to Him, rather than to part with them; it is most certain, we shall be accounted utterly

^y Omnia ista, quæ sensibus serviunt, quæ nos accendunt et irritant, negat Plato ex iis esse, quæ vere sunt. Igitur ista imaginaria sunt, et ad tempus aliquam faciem habent. Nihil horum stabile nec solidum est. Et nos tamen ea cupi-

mus tanquam aut semper futura, aut semper habituri. Mittamus animum ad illa quæ æterna sunt. Contemnamus omnia, quæ adeo pretiosa non sunt, ut an sint omnino dubium sit.

^z Matt. x. 37, &c.

unworthy of Him and His heavenly kingdom. God be praised, though not very long since a dismal cloud hung just over our heads, and sadly threatened us, yet now we are in no very near prospect of a time of persecution, wherein we shall be put to this trial.

But yet we should always retain a preparation of mind, when God calls us to it, to do or suffer any thing, rather than endanger our interest in Christ, and that inestimable happiness, that is offered us in, with, and by Him. This preparation of mind, indeed, many confident persons boast of, who are very far from it; as, on the other side, many a sincere and humble Christian may tremble at the apprehension that he wants it, when indeed he hath it.

But by our behaviour in a peaceable, prosperous time, we may shrewdly guess what we should do in a time of trial. He that cannot quit a base vile lust, upon Christ's command, we may be certain will never part with his life for Christ's sake. He that cannot endure the little severities of mortification, will hardly suffer the pains of martyrdom. He who through an evil conscience lives in a continual slavish fear of a natural death, will scarce with courage and resolution meet a violent death, though in never so good a cause. He that, in the abundance of the good things of this life, cannot, by the many repeated strict commands and most bountiful promises of our Lord, be persuaded to expend a considerable portion of his estate in pious and charitable uses, you may be certain, if Christ should call him "to forsake all and follow Him," he would turn his back upon this call; and though perhaps he might, with the rich young man in the Gospel, "go away sorrowful," as being loath to leave his hopes of heaven; yet go away he would, leaving Christ, and cleaving to the world.

In a word, no covetous, or voluptuous, or ambitious man, can be *idoneus auditor*, a "fit hearer of the doctrine of the Cross;" nor will either of them, whilst such, be ever able to practise it. But, on the other side, the truly mortified Christian, that is dead to this world, and lives the life of God, that serves God, and doth his duty faithfully in the time of peace, let him not be over solicitous what he shall do in the time of persecution; but let him humbly depend upon the

grace and goodness of God, which will never fail him. He may comfort himself with the sure promise of God by St. Paul to all good Christians^a; "God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." And so much of the third thing which this worthiness comprehends, viz. a well-weighed and fixed resolution, &c.

4. This worthiness of meetness, fitness, or due disposition for the heavenly glory, comprehends a deep and profound sense of our own utter unworthiness of it. "A great part of our worthiness consists in an ingenuous confession and acknowledgment of our unworthiness^b," saith a great author upon this subject.

We can never in God's gracious account be worthy of the future happiness, *i. e.* fit to receive it from God's infinite mercy in Christ, if we think ourselves worthy of it, *i. e.* in the least to merit or deserve it. No, on the contrary, the best of us, after all our best performances, must sue for heaven in the quality of poor, worthless, nay, sinful creatures.

We must debase ourselves to the lowest degree, and extol and magnify the riches of God's grace and mercy in Christ Jesus, Who hath called us to the participation of so excellent a glory, and admits us to it upon so equitable, so easy a condition, as that of "faith working by love;" which also, by the assistance of His Holy Spirit, we are enabled to perform. David, when he saw but this lower heaven, with the glorious lights that shine therein, and considered that those excellent bodies are all subservient to the uses of us mortal men, that crawl on this spot of earth, was wrapt into wonder and astonishment, as we find Psalm viii. 3, &c.; "When I consider the heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." But if we could, as St. Paul once did, look within the veil, into the holy of holies, the highest heaven, the presence-chamber of the supreme and universal King, and see but a glimpse of the supertranscendent glories that are

^a 1 Cor. x. 13.

^b Magna pars est dignitatis nostræ, indignitatem nostram ingenue confiteri.

therein; and then reflected, that this is the glory to which we clods of earth are called and invited, yea, and ("Hear O heaven! and give ear, O earth!") wooed to accept; how should we be even swallowed up with amazement, and, if we were able to speak for wonder, how should we forbear to cry out, "O infinitely good and gracious God! O most meritorious Saviour and Redeemer Jesus! Who, when Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, didst open this kingdom of heaven to all believers!"

It is very easy for us to lose ourselves in this speculation, and therefore I pass from it to what remains.

5. And lastly, This worthiness of the heavenly glory comprehends a mighty zeal, industry, and diligence, in our endeavour to obtain it.

He that believes he shall come to heaven without labour and diligence, his belief is contrary to the very nature and notion of true faith, which the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews assures us, is to believe, that "God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him," not of such as negligently and lazily serve Him. And accordingly, the same author exhorts us, "not to be slothful, but to be followers of them, who through faith and patience" (*i. e.* an unwearied diligence and perseverance in the service of God) "inherit the promises."

Indeed the Holy Scriptures do every where inculcate and press on us an earnest, vehement study and endeavour in the business of our salvation. We are commanded to "strive to enter in at the strait gate;" to labour "for that meat which endures to everlasting life;" to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling;" to "press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;" to "give all diligence, to make our calling and election sure; that so an entrance may be ministered to us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

But I shall insist only on that one text, as most apposite to our present purpose, which on another account we have already cited out of Luke xxi. 36; "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

They are the words of our Lord Himself, wherein He plainly shews us what we must do, if we will be accounted worthy to escape those dreadful things, which shall befall the wicked at the day of the universal judgment, (for that he principally respects in that chapter, and not only the destruction of the wicked Jews, the type and shadow of it,) and to stand before the Judge as acquitted and absolved persons; to stand at His right hand among those holy ones, to whom He will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." If we would be accounted, through the grace and mercy of God in Christ Jesus, worthy of this, we must do these two things; we must "watch," and we must "pray," and that "always." We must "watch," *i. e.* stand upon our guard, look about us, use all possible care and diligence to avoid those temptations to sin wherewith we are surrounded; and not only so, but we must also watch, and carefully observe all opportunities of doing our duty, of doing and receiving good: nor must we only watch, but also pray to God for His grace, to enable us to do our duty, and to persevere therein.

How aptly are these two things joined together! We must not presume on the assistance of God's grace without our own care and endeavour; nor must we so rely on our own endeavour, as not to see our continual need of God's grace, without which all our endeavours will prove vain and ineffectual. *Προσοχὴ* and *προσευχὴ*, "care" and "prayer," must go together, and in both we must persevere. We must "watch and pray" *ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ* "at all times;" *i. e.* we must live in the daily exercise of watchfulness, care, and diligence, about the concerns of our immortal souls; and also in a constant course of devotion, of serious and most earnest prayer to God day and night, for His grace to assist us; ever both looking to ourselves, and also looking to God for help. This must be our constant employment, whilst we live on this earth.

And if thus we do, our Lord Himself, Who is to be our Judge, hath beforehand assured us, that "at the great day of trial we shall be accounted worthy to stand before Him:" *i. e.* we shall carry our cause at His tribunal, be accounted and pronounced righteous in His sight, according to that law of grace

and mercy, which He, as our Saviour, hath procured, ratified, and confirmed with His most precious blood.

This is the worthiness required in those that shall be partakers of the future heavenly glory. It comprehends these five things: 1. A stedfast belief and persuasion of the certainty of the future glory. 2. A vigorous and lively apprehension and consideration of its transcendent worth and excellence, compared with whatsoever happiness this present life can offer in competition with it. 3. A well-weighed and fixed resolution to part with any thing that is most dear to us in this world, rather than lose our shares and interest therein. 4. A profound and deep sense of our own utter unworthiness of it. 5. And lastly, A mighty zeal, industry, and diligence, in our endeavour to obtain it.

APPLICATION.

Now from this discourse, (that I may briefly apply it,) we cannot but see too much reason sadly to reflect on the state and condition of the generality of professed Christians. If none shall be partakers of the future heavenly glory, but such as have this worthiness of meetness, fitness, and due disposition for it, how few are there among those that have been baptized into the faith of Christ, and profess their hopes of heaven, who can produce any colourable claim and title to it!

There are two sorts of persons, I am sure, that are here deeply concerned.

1. If this be true, what will become of the notoriously vicious, the gross and scandalous sinner, the drunkard, the adulterer, the fornicator, the common swearer, the malicious and revengeful person, the liar, the extortioner, the oppressor, and such like? Can any of these men (even in the most merciful estimation) be thought worthy of, *i. e.* meet and fit, for the heavenly glory? Was the kingdom of heaven, think you, ever prepared or designed for such as these? Certainly, No! I need not insist long on this, the case is so plain; and therefore St. Paul seems to wonder at the sottish and stupid ignorance of those who can imagine a vicious life to be reconcileable with the hopes of heaven^c; “Know ye not that the unrighteous

^c 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." The good Lord of His mercy open the eyes of these men, that they may see their wretched condition before it be too late, and seasonably take the advice of St. James^d; "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up."

2. This discourse discovers the vain hope of the careless, negligent, idle, and unprofitable Christian, that rests in a negative religion; who hath no other ground for his hope of heaven, but that he is no scandalous sinner; whilst in the mean time he hath no lively sense of religion, and lives in the ordinary neglect of the manifest duties of Christianity, both those of piety towards God, and of charity towards his neighbour; who, by his carelessness in those matters, declares that religion is none of his main design or business. How much a stranger is this man to frequent, fervent, and serious prayer in private! to the diligent and daily study of the Holy Scriptures! to daily meditation of heaven and heavenly things! In a word, view him in the whole course of his life, and you will think he scarce in good earnest believed a life to come, or had any serious thoughts of his eternal state in the other world. Now surely the worthiness we have been discoursing of, implies another kind of religion than this.

The sum is, no man shall be accounted worthy of the future heavenly glory, but he that, stedfastly believing it, doth before all things desire it, and thinks no labour too much to obtain it. He whose greatest care it is, how he may save his precious and immortal soul, and accordingly makes religion his main business. He who watches and prays daily, and, in a word, who lives a life fruitful of good works, works of piety towards God, and (according to his ability) of charity towards men. This

^d Chap. iv. 8—10.

man, and he only, though indeed unworthy in himself, yet through the rich mercy of God, and the merits of Christ, shall be accounted worthy of the blessed immortality, to live with the holy angels, yea, with God Himself, in the beatific vision and fruition of Him for ever and ever.

To which blessed state, God of His infinite mercy bring us all, through His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

To Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, now and for ever.
Amen.

SERMON X.^a

THAT THE POVERTY OF THE FIRST PREACHERS OF THE GOSPEL WAS DESIGNED BY PROVIDENCE TO CONVINCe THE WORLD OF THEIR SINCERITY: AND THAT EVEN PERSONS DIVINELY INSPIRED, AND MINISTERS OF GOD, DID NOT SO WHOLLY DEPEND UPON DIVINE INSPIRATION, BUT THAT THEY MADE USE ALSO OF THE ORDINARY HELP AND MEANS, SUCH AS READING OF BOOKS, WITH STUDY AND MEDITATION ON THEM, FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE IN THE DISCHARGE OF THEIR OFFICE.

2 TIM. iv. 13.

The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

THE sacred writings of the Old and New Testament, being penned by holy persons either entirely and immediately inspired, or directed and assisted by the Divine Spirit in what they meditated and wrote, have nothing in them that is frivolous or useless, nothing but what may yield us profitable matter of instruction, if rightly understood.

The seemingly very little things in them are many times, upon farther search and consideration, found to be of no little use. Such is the text I have now read: a place of Scripture which I have made choice of, not so much to shew my skill in improving a seemingly barren text, as because it is the most apposite, and the fittest I could find, whereon to found a discourse, which I think may be of very good use to many in the age wherein we live. To make way whereunto, I must borrow some of your time and patience for the opening and explaining of the text itself.

^a [This Sermon was probably written some years before the last: he speaks of the Church's prosperity after a few interruptions, and alludes to the Quakers, who were numerous in his parish of Suddington: this might seem to fix the date between the Restoration and 1685, when he left Suddington.]

St. Paul wrote this Epistle from Rome to Timothy in the Lesser Asia, where St. Paul had formerly been, and had in that time thrice, at least, visited Troas, the chief city of a country of that name, the same with the old city of Troy, so famous for the ten years siege of the Grecians against it. At his last being at that city, he had left some things behind him there, which he now desires Timothy, when he came to Rome, to bring with him, as things that he stood in need of, and might be useful to him: and what were they?

First, “The cloke that I left at Troas;” in the Greek it is τὸν φελόνην, a word borrowed from the Latins, as appears from the other writing of it often used, τὸν φενόλην, *penulam*, which signifies a cloke, or upper garment, such as travellers use to defend themselves with from the cold or bad weather.

“And the books.” The sacred books of the Old Testament, say some very confidently; but I must crave leave to dissent from them. For though I question not but that St. Paul was very conversant in those sacred books, and esteemed them above all human writings, yet it is very improbable that these were the books here meant. For the Scriptures of the Old Testament, were to be had in all the Churches of Christ where St. Paul came, being constantly read in the Christian assemblies, as well as in those of the Jews; so that he could not be in such want of them, as to send for them from Rome as far as Troas. Nor is it likely, that he would give the common appellative name of “books” to the divinely-inspired writings, without any other note of distinction.

But it is certain, that St. Paul had read other books besides the Scriptures, which what they were may best be gathered from his education, and from those footsteps and tracings of his reading, which appear in his writings. He was bred a scholar “at the feet of Gamaliel^b,” a learned and famous doctor among the Jews, very probably the same of whom we read^c, “Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of law, had in reputation among all the people,” &c. But that he was a very learned and celebrated doctor among the Jews of that age is most certain, and confessed by all Christian expositors.

^b Acts xxii. 3.

^c Acts v. 34.

Under this famous tutor, St. Paul, questionless, made a great proficiency in all the learning of his time and country. There were then extant very excellent books of Jewish learning, written by men renowned in their generations, before our Saviour's coming in the flesh; which are now perished, little more than the authors' names surviving;) of which St. Paul, being the pupil of so great a master in that sort of learning, cannot reasonably be supposed to have been ignorant. These were partly exegetical, and explanatory of the mysterious senses veiled under the letter of the Law and the Prophets; and partly historical. The ancient books, containing the mysteries of the Jewish religion, are by the latter Jews stifled and suppressed, as making too much for the Christian cause. Yet we have somewhat of this kind of learning still preserved, especially in the writings of Philo the Jew, though mixed with much trash; like a few thin and slender veins of gold running through a great mass or body of earth and dross. And it is plain to him that hath carefully read St. Paul's Epistles, and is acquainted also with the writings of Philo, that the holy Apostle well understood that cabalistical theology of the Jews, and retained so much of it, as by the direction of the Divine Spirit in him, he found to be sound, good, and genuine. In the tenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul expounds the "manna showered on the Israelites in the wilderness," and "the rock that gave them water to quench their thirst," to be significations of our Saviour Christ; and shews, moreover, that "the angel going before the people of God in that their pilgrimage," and "tempted by them," was our Lord Christ. And all this Philo likewise understands of the *Λόγος*, the "Word^d," or Son of God, which we Christians know to have been in the fulness of time made man, and called by the name of Jesus Christ. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, (who is supposed by some to have been St. Paul himself, but was questionless, if not St. Paul, yet a contemporary and acquaintance of his,) in the fourth chapter of that Epistle^e, speaking of the *Λόγος*, the "Word" of God, useth almost the very same expressions, but altogether the same sense, that Philo hath, discoursing of the same matter in his

^d Vide Phil.^e Ver. 12, 13.

writings; as hath been observed by the learned Grotius on the place; who from that and other indications conjectures, that the divine author had read the books of that learned Jew.

And for the Jewish history, whence had St. Paul the names of Jannes and Jambres, no where mentioned in the sacred chronicle, but from some other ancient records extant in his time, which he had read, and so far approved? Nor was St. Paul unacquainted with the heathen writers celebrated in his time; for these he sometimes makes use of for the conviction of the heathens with whom he had to do, and whose Apostle chiefly and especially he was, as by his learning the fittest for that office. Thus in his sermon to the Athenians^f, he quotes a testimony out of one of the Greek poets, in these words: "As certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." The poet he cites was of Cilicia, St. Paul's native country, named Aratus, who had this in his poems, "For we are also his offspring^g."

Thus also in his Epistle to Titus^h, he cites a verse of one of the prophets or poets of the Cretans, "One of them, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, and slow belliesⁱ." Epimenides is the author of the verse, who was a prophet, not only in the sense that all poets are so called, but a pretender also to enthusiasm and prophecy in the stricter sense, as Cicero tells us in his book of Divination^k, and owned as such among the heathens, even the more learned of them.

So in the first Epistle to the Corinthians^l, he cites this Greek sentence;

Φθείρουσιν ἥθη χρηστὸν ὁμιλίας κακαί.

i. e. "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" which is a verse of the poet Menander, as St. Jerom hath long ago observed. And that St. Paul had diligently perused the Epistles of Heraclitus the Ephesian, hath been abundantly proved by the learned Scultetus^m, who also gathers from the Platonic phrases often used by him, that he had read likewise some writings of the Platonistsⁿ.

^f Acts xvii. 28.

^g Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν.

^h Chap. i. 12.

ⁱ Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψεύσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί.

^k [Lib. i. 18.]

^l Chap. xv. 33.

^m Orat. de Philol. et Theol. conjunctione, Delic. Evangelicis præmissa.

ⁿ Vid. Scult. Observ. in 2 Tim. i. 6.

Some few choice books of both these kinds, (but very few, according to his poverty,) St. Paul had made a shift to get and preserve, but for the present left at Troas, from whence he desires Timothy to convey them, as being of use to him. But let us go on in the words of the text.

“But especially the parchments,” τὰς μεμβράνας, a Latin word again made Greek, signifying the “skins of beasts,” smoothed, dried, and fitted to receive writing on them, which we call parchments. These, as learned interpreters generally concludeⁿ, (nor can it well be otherwise imagined,) were St. Paul’s *adversaria*, or commonplace books, wherein he had written down what he had observed, as worthy of more especial notice, in the reading either of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, or the other books but now mentioned, for the help of his memory. The blessed Apostle could not, by reason of his poverty, (as hath been already observed,) be the master and owner of a complete library of the learned books extant in his time; and if he could, it was not possible for him to carry it about with him in his travels; and therefore he had his parchments, wherein he had noted what he thought might be of use to him, out of the many books he had read. Concerning these collections, as being probably the fruit of some years reading and study, he gives Timothy a most special charge to take care of their safe conveyance to him: “but especially the parchments.”

This may suffice for the explanation of my text. I come now to raise such useful observations from it, as, being so explained, it naturally affords us.

1. Then, I observe here, the poverty and mean estate of the great Apostle Paul. It is indeed Erasmus’s observation on the place: “Behold the Apostle’s goods, or moveables, a poor cloke to keep him from the weather, and a few books^o!” And Grotius’s note on the text is to the same purpose: “See the poverty of so great an Apostle, who could not want so little a thing as a cloke left at Troas, but charges Timothy to bring it with him from so remote a distance^p!” Hence

ⁿ V. Est. et Grot. in loc.

^o En suppellectilem Apostolicam, penulam quæ defendat ab imbribus et libros aliquot.

^p Vide paupertatem tanti Apostoli qui rem tantillam tam longe relictam, inter damna censuerit.

St. Paul himself often takes notice of his own poverty. So^a, “Even unto this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; and labour, working with our own hands.” And that he lived by his labour, he tells us^r; “Yea, yourselves know, that these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me.” And the same thing he expresseth in other places, which I have not time now to recite.

This was a singular design of God’s providence towards the Apostles in general, who were all of them kept in a poor and mean, yea in a most afflicted and miserable condition, as St. Paul observes^s; “For I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed unto death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. For unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless: being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.”

The design of Providence was, that hereby the world, to whom the Apostles preached the Gospel, might be fully convinced of their sincerity in the preaching of it; that they sought not themselves, or their own ease and advantage, but were content for the propagation of the Gospel, of which they were Ministers, to endure the greatest inconveniences, necessities, and extremities. This was sufficient to satisfy all sober and reasonable persons, that they had no design of their own; that their only aim was the advancement of that truth, which, with so great a loss and hazard to themselves, they constantly published to the world.

But this was not to be the standard and measure of the Ministers of Christ, in the after more flourishing and prosperous condition of the Church, when “kings should become their nursing-fathers, and queens their nursing-mothers,” as it

^a 1 Cor. iv. 11, 12.

^s 1 Cor. iv. 9—13.

^r Acts xx. 34.

was prophesied^t. The Church of Christ, even in the first ages and times of persecution, had its *γαλήνην*, its "calm" sometimes, when the powers of the earth favoured them, and allowed them a more peaceable and prosperous condition. But when Constantine declared himself Christian, the Church grew splendid and glorious, and the succeeding Emperors thought it their glory, to advance the wealth and honour of it. This prosperous estate of Christians, with some few interruptions, is (God be praised) conveyed down to us at this day, and may it for ever continue! whilst the designs of those that envy the Church's prosperity perish, and are brought to nought. But if ever a time of poverty and affliction shall befall us, we are then to follow the example of the Apostles of Christ; to be contented with our poverty and affliction, and by no means to be deterred from the constant asserting of the truth we preach and profess.

But this is not the point I intend to prosecute, there being another observation as naturally arising from my text, and which I designed to be the chief subject of my discourse at this time.

2. Therefore I observe, that even the divinely-inspired persons and Ministers of God, did not so wholly depend upon divine inspiration, but that they made use also of the ordinary helps and means, such as reading of books, with study and meditation on them, for their assistance in the discharge of their office.

St. Paul had his books which he had read, and his manuscripts too, or collection of notes, which he found to be useful to him, and therefore gives Timothy a special charge to convey them safely to him.

And it is farther to be observed, that he earnestly exhorts his son Timothy to the same course of reading and study^u; "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. Meditate on these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." Where we have several things observable to our purpose. 1. The exhortation is to Timothy, a man

^t Isaiah xlix. 23.

^u 1 Tim. iv. 13—15.

placed by the Apostles Bishop at Ephesus, the Metropolis of the Lesser Asia, which, though called the Lesser, was of a very great and wide extent; a man that was the beloved son, or darling scholar and disciple, of the great Apostle St. Paul; a man marked out long before by prophecies, as one that should prove a very eminent and excellent person, or by the spirit of prophecy in the Apostles, after a singular manner appointed to the Ministry of the Gospel^x; a man accordingly endowed with extraordinary and immediately infused abilities, signified by the *χάρισμα*, or “gift,” said here to be given him in his ordination. This man St. Paul exhorts to reading and meditation, for the better discharge of his office. 2. The order of the Apostle’s exhortation to him, is observable; “Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine:” to reading, before exhortation or doctrine. He is advised to be himself first a well-read and learned Divine, that he might be the better able to instruct and teach others. 3. The emphatical words used by the Apostle in the exhortation, are remarkable. He adviseth Timothy, not only to “read” and “study,” that he might be able to exhort and teach with profit; but presseth him to “give attendance” to reading, not to “neglect” the supernatural gift bestowed on him, to “meditate” on what he read and learned, and to addict and “give himself wholly” to these things. All which phrases plainly signify the greatest industry and diligence to be used by him in reading and study, and the other exercises there mentioned. The same thing, doubtless, St. Paul intends, when he admonisheth the same Timothy to “stir up the gift of God” within him^y, where the Greek word is *ἀναζωπυρεῖν*, which properly signifies to “cherish” or “rekindle” fire, (that will otherwise go out and die in its own ashes,) by blowing it up, and adding new fuel to it.

Thus the gifts of God in men, even the extraordinary gifts, such as Timothy had, will soon decay, die, and be extinguished in the ashes, as it were, of their sloth and negligence, and require continual refreshment and reparation from their diligence in reading, studying, and praying; and I add also, charitable using and exercising those gifts for the good of others. A learned man thinks, that the Apostle, speaking of

^x 1 Tim. i. 18.

^y 2 Tim. i. 6.

“gifts” more immediately infused from above, alludes to the “fire of the altar under the Law,” that first came down from heaven, but was afterwards to be preserved and maintained by the Priests with a constant supply of wood, and their continual care in cherishing it^z. This is sufficient to shew us the practice of the divinely-inspired persons under the New Testament.

I add, that the holy Prophets, under the Old Testament, took the same course, not depending so wholly upon immediate revelation and inspiration from God, as to think all endeavour and diligence on their own part needless; but, on the contrary, taking pains to be Prophets, being for a long time educated in societies and schools of that divine learning, under a constant discipline and exercise for the attaining of the gift of Prophecy; and when they had attained it, still using a proportionable diligence for the maintenance, preservation, and increase of it. For we read of colleges and incorporated societies, consisting of Prophets and their sons, or of Prophets and their scholars and disciples; the one receiving instruction from the other, just as it is in the colleges of our Universities.

That there were such colleges of Prophets anciently among the Jews, over each of which one more excellent Prophet was president, is most certain from divers texts of Scripture. The first mention of such a college we have 1 Sam. x. 10; “And when they” (*i. e.* Saul and his company) “came thither to the hill, behold, a company of Prophets met them,” &c. “A company of Prophets,” that is, saith Drusius, “a company of students devoting themselves to the study of Prophecy^a.” Where by the way observe, that those prophetic colleges were usually erected in remoter and higher places, on hills distant from towns and cities, as the fittest and most commodious places for a studious contemplative life. But more clear is that place, 1 Sam. xix. 20; “And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the Prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them,” &c. Here we have plainly a college, or society of Prophets together, and Samuel appointed as president of the college.

Of “the sons of the Prophets,” or those students that entered

^z Leviticus vi. 12, 13, compared with chap. ix. 24.

^a Cohors studiosorum operam dantium prophetiæ.

themselves in the colleges of the Prophets, to be instructed by their several presidents, we have express mention 2 Kings ii., where^b we read of “the sons of the Prophets” that were at Bethel coming to Elisha, and giving him warning that Elias should presently be taken from him. And^c there is mention made of another college of Prophets at Jericho, who afterwards^d, are said to have done reverence to Elisha succeeding Elias.

So in 2 Kings iv. 38. we read, that Elisha being at Gilgal, “the sons of the Prophets were sitting before him;” viz. in the posture of disciples and scholars, to learn and receive instruction from their master. And because the disciples sat in a lower form or seat, under their masters and teachers, they are said to sit at their feet. Hence the people of Israel’s receiving the law from God is thus expressed, “They sat down at Thy feet; every one shall receive of Thy words^e.” So St. Paul is said to have been “brought up,” or educated, “at the feet of Gamaliel^f.”

The business of these colleges of the Prophets is by learned men described to be this: they were taught by their presidents the law of God; they were instructed in the prophecies of those Prophets that went before them; they were taught by what ways and means they might obtain the gift of prophecy, or the increase of it; they were informed what was the scope and signification of the sacrifices and ceremonial laws, by which the things that were to come to pass in the time of the Messiah were prefigured; and, in a word, they were in those colleges taught the whole mystery of the Jewish religion, according to the time and age, and their several capacities. So that even prophecy was a science among the ancient Jews, and men were trained up to it by discipline and education.

I shall only add, that Daniel, the most excellent of Prophets, (though the latter Jews out of prejudice will scarce allow him a room or place in that sacred order,) is not ashamed to confess, that he had learned something by reading the writings of the Prophet Jeremiah that was before him^g; “I, Daniel, understood by books the number of years, whereof the word of the

^b Verse 3.^c Verse 7.^d Verse 15.^e Deut. xxxiii. 3.^f Acts xxii. 3.^g Dan. ix. 2.

Lord came to Jeremiah the Prophet." Which also may serve to confirm what was said before, that the sons of the Prophets in their colleges were instructed in the prophecies of those Prophets who were before them. For if so accomplished a Prophet as Daniel made use of the books of the preceding Prophets, we may be sure that those young novices in the study of prophecy were taught by their masters diligently to peruse them.

And this may suffice for the proof of my latter observation, viz. That even the divinely-inspired persons and Ministers of God did not so wholly depend upon divine inspiration, but that they made use also of the ordinary helps and means; such as reading of books, with study and meditation on them, for their assistance in the discharge of their office.

I now proceed to the use and improvement of this doctrine.

1. This serves to discover the folly of those who renounce all books and book-learning as needless, and of no use to them; and bid defiance to all study and reading, under pretence of a spirit or light within them, sufficiently able to direct and guide them in all things. Of which sort the sect called Quakers are especially to be noted. For you see the great Apostle St. Paul read books, not only sacred, but human, and had his parchments, probably collections of notes gathered out of the books that he had read; and that the same St. Paul exhorts his beloved Timothy, an Archbishop in the Apostolic Church, to the same diligence in reading and studying, that he might be the better enabled for the discharge of his duty; and, lastly, that the Prophets themselves under the Old Testament observed the same method. What an insufferable impudence then are they guilty of, who nowadays decry all reading, study, and learning, and rely only on enthusiasm and immediate inspiration! The Apostles, the Prophets, and other undoubtedly inspired persons, thought that necessary, which these men (that cannot give the least proof of any such inspiration in themselves) despise as wholly useless to them. Let me advise them to consider, that the Spirit of God, even in the times of the extraordinary dispensation of it, was never given to any but the diligent and industrious, and such as did their best to attain divine wisdom; not only by praying for it, but also

by reading and studying the books and writings of the wise men that were before them. Let them consider, that the Spirit of God never dwelt with the slothful or lazy; or with those who, presuming on its inspiration, neglected the use of those ordinary means of getting knowledge, which Providence afforded them. The Divine assistance and human industry always went together hand in hand, and an anathema is due to that doctrine that separates and divides them.

And yet, see the age we live in! enthusiasm and atheism divide the spoil, and the former makes way for the latter, till at length it be devoured by it. In the mean while, enthusiasm fills the conventicle and empties the church: silly people dance after its pipe, and are lured by it from their lawful, orthodox teachers, to run they know not whither, to hear they know not whom, and to learn they know not what. And till the minds of men are better informed and possessed with righter notions of things, it is impossible they should ever be brought to any regular and sober religion. Nothing in religion will nowadays be acceptable to many, but what pretends to a more immediate inspiration from God; and the bare colour thereof, be it never so small and slender, will almost make any thing pass for current divinity. Let a man preach without authority, and without book, and make show as if he did it extempore, and by the sudden suggestion of the Spirit, and he shall be cried up by the vulgar, though he deliver the plainest nonsense. No discourse will please them, but that which is not only delivered without book, (for so to do is no fault, but rather commendable, when it is added as an ornament to a well-studied and substantial discourse, and done without vanity, and occasions no expense of time, that might be spent to better purpose,) but also pretended to be made without book, that is, without consulting beforehand the books of the wise and learned. Thus the people are deceived, and love to be so; and who can help it?

And yet my charity prompts me to try a dilemma on these miserably deluded persons. They that tell you they preach without the help of any precedent reading or study, by a mere and immediate dependence on the assistance of the Spirit, either they say true or false: if what they say be true, they are guilty of a very great and intolerable presumption, in despising

those helps which the divinely-inspired persons, both under the Old and New Testament, thought useful to them: if they tell you that which is false, and whilst they pretend to immediate inspiration, use the help of reading and study, you are to shun them as liars and cheats, and to have no more to do with them. The truth is, the men with whom we have to do are of two sorts, each of which must needs fall under the one or the other part of the dilemma. Some of them do indeed in their profession renounce, and in their practice too much neglect, reading and study, as sufficiently appears by the fulsome repetitions, impertinence, nonsense, and too often heresies and blasphemies, in their discourses: others take some pains for what they do, and shew something of industry and diligence in their performances, easily to be discovered by a more careful observer of them, and thereby betray the fraud and falsehood of their pretences.

Intolerable is the consequence of the error I am now reproving; for it directly tends to the perfect phrensy and madness of those, who declaim against the nurseries of learning, the Universities themselves, as the nurseries of men that will, by their carnal reasoning and learning, obstruct the advancement of the more spiritual Gospel. Alas! what will this conceit bring men to at length, but barbarism and confusion? And who are the authors that teach these silly men to decry learning, but the Papists, whom yet they seem most of all to defy? For take away Universities and learning, and they are sure of their opportunity, and that the more ignorant will in tract of time be easily brought to any religion, and so to theirs. If learning and the schools of learning be once suppressed among us, we shall in a little time have no learned men to stand in the gap, and to keep out Popery. *Hoc Ithacus velit*, this is that which the Jesuit would have, and passionately desires. In short, Popery was born and bred in ignorant and unlearned ages; and as soon as learning revived, Popery began to decline, till at last the happy Reformation ensued, which we now enjoy; and if ever learning run to decay again, we must expect to relapse into Popery, or something else as bad as or worse than that.

But let us proceed in the improvement of the doctrine we are now upon.

2. This may teach all Ministers of the Gospel their duty; viz. diligently to read and study the Holy Scriptures in the first place; and next to them the books of learned and good men that have bestowed their pains in explaining them, and whatever books besides they can get which may be any way useful to them in their ministry.

It is the note of the learned and judicious Estius upon the text: "Let Bishops and Priests," saith he, "learn from hence what great need they have of continual reading and study, how great soever their proficiency may already be; seeing St. Paul, who had been taught the mysteries of religion by the Lord Christ Himself, and now a long time exercised in the office of an Apostle, had still occasion to make use of books." And when we consider how strict a charge the same Apostle gives Timothy, that great Apostolic Prelate, to apply himself to reading and study; and that the inspired Prophets, under the Old Testament, thought the same exercises necessary for themselves; how dare we, (very mushrooms, the best of us, compared to them,) either through pride, scorn and rejeet, or out of sloth and laziness, neglect, those helps? We ought not in the least to value the clamours of the wild fanatics among us, who cry out, "That if we study for what we do, we do it not by the Spirit;" as if the assistance of the Spirit and human industry were inconsistent with, yea repugnant to, each other. For on the contrary we may be assured, from what hath been said, that the Spirit of God will help none but the studious and industrious. Let us therefore give attendanee to reading and study, yea, addict ourselves wholly to these exercises, with daily prayer to God for His blessing on them, that our profiting may appear unto all men.

3. And lastly, this may serve to instruct also lay Christians in their duty of diligently reading the saered Scriptures, and those other good books, that God's providence hath furnished them with, in order to their instruction in the matters of religion. If the Ministers of Christ, yea, the very Apostles of Christ, have thought reading and study useful to them, can you think you have no need at all of it? It is true, more time and pains in those exercises is required of the Ministers of religion, than of others; but none are wholly exempted and excused

from the duty; because all men are bound to be “wise unto salvation,” and to be so requires no small pains and industry. Ministers are to read that they may be able to teach; and you are to read that you may be capable of learning, or being taught. For unless there be a concurrent industry in the teacher and the disciple, the one teacheth in vain, because the other will never learn.

Be sure therefore daily to read the Holy Scriptures, and those other good books you have or can procure, that may help you to understand them. And if any of you cannot read yourselves, (I hope there are very few, if any, in this congregation under so unhappy circumstances,) get some relation, friend, or neighbour, to read to you; and they must be very uncharitable indeed, that will deny you that assistance. They that cannot read are concerned to double their diligence in hearing, and in a more careful attendance on all opportunities of instruction that shall be offered them in public, and in asking and seeking after instruction from their Ministers in private, adding their daily and most earnest prayers to God for the assistance of His Holy Spirit in the use of those means, and encouraging themselves with that promise of His^h; “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”

In a word, let none of you think or imagine divine wisdom and knowledge so cheap a thing, as to be obtained without labour and diligence. And remember that it is worth your while and pains to learn the right way to heaven; for if you miss it, you are undone for ever.

Wherefore “consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.”

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, now and for ever. *Amen.*

^h James i. 5.

SERMON XI.

THE EXISTENCE OF ANGELS PROVED FROM REASON AS WELL AS SCRIPTURE, THEIR CREATION BY GOD, THE FALL OF SOME OF THEM, THE NATURE OF THE HOLY ANGELS, THEIR STATE AND CONDITION IN REFERENCE TO GOD.

HEBREWS i. 14.

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

THE subject-matter of my text, concerning the holy angels of God, hath suffered between two extremes, the bold presumptuous curiosity of some, and the desperate or supine carelessness and unconcernedness of others about it; some flying too high, others sinking too low; some thinking and speaking too much, others too little, of those noble beings, which we call angels. St. Paul takes notice of some in his time, whose curiosity in this inquiry led them to a religious worship of angels, whom therefore he condemns, as “intruding into those things which they had not seen, vainly puffed up by their fleshly minds^a.”

But to let these pass, about the end of the fourth century (as it is probably conjectured) there came forth a book under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, (the convert and disciple of St. Paul, of whom we read Acts xvii. 34,) entitled “Concerning the Celestial Hierarchy;” wherein the author speaks so sublimely, so punctually, with so much assurance of the things above, as if he had himself surveyed the heavenly mansions, and, as a learned man expresseth it, taken an exact inventory of all that is there. The book was either unknown to, or not much relied on, by the Catholic Doctors of the next ages, as appears by the sentiments and notions they had of the orders

^a Col. ii. 18.

of angels, very different from the determinations of that author. But afterwards the schoolmen and others of the Church of Rome, taking the book to be really his, whose name it bears, received all the groundless conjectures therein, as very truths, yea, well nigh adored them as divine oracles. Nor have these men been contented with the speculations of that author, but have ventured farther, and raised many more curious and fruitless inquiries concerning angels, than he ever dreamt of. It must needs disgust a sober man to read the many nice and idle questions they have started, and taken a great deal of pains to resolve, especially concerning the knowledge of angels. Methinks men that know so little of themselves, and are so unable to give a certain account of the operations of their own inward faculties of understanding, willing, and remembering, nay, of the very perceptions they have of things by their outward senses, should be more modest, and not dare so confidently to discourse of those sublimer beings, or to tell how and what they do or can know.

Wherefore others, out of a dread and abhorrence of such presumption, have run themselves into the contrary extreme, and can scarce endure any professed discourse of angels, or let it pass, without the censure of vain and dangerous curiosity. And this their folly they call prudence, modesty, and humility, and endeavour to justify it by the authority of an old threadbare maxim, (the common shelter of dulness, stupidity, and negligence about divine things,) "Those things that are above us, do not at all concern us^b." I will not undertake to make comparisons between this and the other extreme; but of this I am certain, that the ill consequences of the latter extreme are very great.

For by this conceit, the most noble part of the creation is hid from our eyes, and banished out of the bounds and limits of the Christian philosophy. By this pretence, the majesty of the Divine empire, to which so many millions of glorious creatures are subject, is lessened and depressed; and men must needs think too highly of themselves, and too meanly of the great and glorious God, if they are not minded sometimes of those more excellent beings that are between God and themselves, "who

^b Quæ supra nos, nihil ad nos.

dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth^c." By this means we must be ignorant of the great instruments of the Divine Providence over us, and deprived of the comfort we might receive from the knowledge of them in the time of our distress and danger. Hereby the best patterns of virtue, which God hath set before us, (next to the example of His most holy Son,) are removed out of our sight; nor can we, with a right understanding, say that our daily petition, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven;" viz. by the holy angels. In a word, the great mistake of those, who would have the doctrine of angels passed over in silence, will plainly appear by the excellent uses of the same doctrine, which I shall endeavour to set before you in the conclusion of this discourse.

But to avoid both the extremes mentioned, our only way will be to keep close to the Holy Scriptures, and to admit only of such speculations concerning this matter, as are plainly taught us by divine Revelation. And a brief summary of the doctrine of Scripture, concerning the holy angels, we have in the short text I have read: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

It is a negative interrogation, which, according to the known rule, is to be resolved into a strong and vehement affirmation: thus, "They," *i. e.* the holy angels, "are certainly all of them ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." In which proposition I shall take notice, first, of the subject or persons spoken of in the word "they." Secondly, of the predicate, or that which is spoken and affirmed of them; viz. that "they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

I. The subject of the proposition, or the persons spoken of in the word "they," are "the holy angels." For of these the divine author had discoursed in the preceding verses of this chapter, and particularly in the verse immediately going before my text; "But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?" And then it follows, "Are they not all ministering spirits?" &c.

That there are such beings in the regions above us, as we

^c Job iv. 19.

call angels; *i. e.* certain permanent substances, invisible and imperceptible to our senses, endowed with understanding and power superior to that of human nature, created by and subject to God, the Supreme Being, and ministering to the Divine Providence in the government of the world, and therein especially of the affairs of men, is most certain from the Holy Scriptures; even those parts of Scripture which the Sadducees themselves undoubtedly acknowledge; viz. the five books of Moses, afford us proofs of this truth so plain and manifest, that nothing but a prejudiced, perverse, and obstinate mind can resist their evidence.

Nay, the very heathen philosophers confessed the existence of angels, although they called them by other names, as demons, genius's, and the like. To this confession they were led, either by a certain natural instinct and force of human reason, or by a prevailing tradition, derived originally from that institution and revelation which God gave to mankind in the early ages of the world, before the dispersion of the sons of Noah; or by experience of such effects and appearances as are unaccountable but upon supposition of such beings; or by all these together.

It is a question indeed in the schools, whether natural reason directs us to the acknowledgment of this truth. But to me it seems out of all doubt, that the existence of angels may be evinced by very cogent reasons, and such as must needs prevail with all those that will give themselves leisure attentively to consider the nature of things. For,

1. Although man be an excellent creature among the creatures of this lower world, yet that very reason, whereby he excels those other creatures, must needs force him to acknowledge, that he himself is too mean a creature to be the first-born and top of the creation, the masterpiece of the works of God, Who is the great Creator and Framers of all things. Supposing that God hath created a complete world, a perfect system of things, comprehending all degrees of entity, as the schoolmen speak, (which is generally acknowledged by philosophers,) it demonstratively follows, that there are such beings as angels.

We have before us in this lower world several ranks of beings; some that have only bare being, as earth, air, water; some that have life too, as plants and trees, and other vegetables;

some that beside life have sense, perception, and discrimination of material objects, as to their outward appearances and accidents, as the brute animals; lastly, some that have beyond all this, a faculty of investigating and searching out the inward nature and properties of things material and sensible, and also of discoursing of immaterial, spiritual, and divine things; which is that to which in our common speech the name of reason or understanding is deservedly appropriated, and is to be found in men, who are the highest order of beings here below.

But yet man is thus rational only in one part of him, being otherwise akin to “the beast that perisheth.” And hence he reasons and discourses of things, not without the help of sense and imagination, and grosser corporeal phantasms, which are as it were the first foundations whereon he raises his highest speculations; and so he is neither wholly nor purely a rational or intelligent creature.

Now it cannot be imagined by any one of deep thought, that the reason of mankind being such, (if we consider human nature, not only as it is now by sin depraved and corrupted, but also as it was and must needs have been in its original constitution; the “first man” himself being as to his body made out of “the dust of the earth,” and his soul afterwards created, and immediately united to it^d), should be the most perfect reason of created beings, or that among them all there should be none of a purer and higher capacity, to know and glorify the great Creator of all things.

It remains, therefore, that besides and above mankind there is a rank of intelligent beings, separated and abstracted from this heavy matter with which we are clogged, of nearer affinity to the supreme and universal mind, and of a purer and sublimer understanding faculty, than that wherewith we mortals are endowed. And these are the beings which we call angels.

For the farther confirmation and illustration of which argument, it is to be considered, that man is evidently a mixed and compounded creature, made up of two very different natures, one far superior to the other, viz. an understanding and an animal nature. Now as we are sure that his inferior animal nature doth exist apart in certain creatures below him, viz. the

^d Gen. ii. 7, compared with 1 Cor. xv. 45—47.

brutes; so we may be as sure, that his other more noble and understanding nature doth exist separately in certain creatures above him, viz. the angels. Thus there could be no wine mixed with water, unless there were such things as wine and water separated from each other; and as water mixed with wine is a more generous liquor than mere water, and yet pure wine without water is better than it; so man being compounded of the understanding and animal nature, is far superior to a mere animal without understanding, that is, a brute; and yet a creature that hath a purer intelligence separated from animality, viz. an angel, is a more noble being than he. This is one not contemptible reason to prove the existence of angels: another follows.

2. Forasmuch as we see this earth whereon we are replenished with men innumerable, by nature capable of understanding and knowing, and consequently of serving and glorifying, the great Creator of all things; it cannot without a very gross absurdity be imagined, that the more noble heavenly regions above us should be empty or void of intelligent creatures, doing homage to the supreme God. What an odd thing would this earth be, if there were no men in it! And yet it would be a stranger *vacuum* in nature, if in the heaven above there should be no understanding beings, to take notice of the wonders of that place, and to serve and praise the God of heaven. If (to avoid this absurdity) any man that will not admit of the existence of angels, should have recourse to the opinion of those of old, who held the heavenly luminaries, the stars, to be living creatures, endowed with reason and understanding, this will easily appear to be a very vain refuge.

For if the stars of heaven had any reason or understanding, they would have also some liberty and freedom of will, and consequently would exert and exercise some free actions; but this it is plain they do not; all their motions being natural, determined, and perpetually returning after one and the same law or order, and therefore necessary. For in philosophy those things are said to be necessarily done, which are always done after the same manner. For this and other plain reasons (which might be produced if the time would permit) that

opinion hath been long since, by heathen as well as Christian philosophers, generally exploded.

Besides, the starry heaven is but as it were the floor or pavement of a heaven above it, the supreme or highest heaven, which is by the consent of nations the place of the Almighty's most especial Presence; all men, by a kind of natural instinct, with minds, eyes, and hands lifted up, directing thither their prayers to God. And can we fancy, that the universal King hath no servants to wait on Him in His presence-chamber, when we see so many paying their devotion to Him at so great a distance here below? Natural reason therefore directs and leads us to an acknowledgment, that there are certain intelligent creatures in the upper world, who, as they are more remote from the dregs of matter wherein we are immersed, so are they of a more pure, refined, and excellent substance, and as far exceeding us in their way of understanding and glorifying the supreme God, as they are of nearer admission to the place where His glory is in the most especial manner manifested: and these are they, who in our sacred writings are known by the name of angels.

And so much of the real existence of angels, proved by the authority of the divinely-inspired writers, by the consent of heathen philosophers, and by very powerful reasons; which I thought fit to premise, lest there should happen to be any Sadducee in this congregation, lurking under the Christian name and profession, (as it is certain too, too many such there are in the Christian world, and even in this our nation,) who might deride our intended discourse of angels, as spent upon a mere fiction, or creature of fancy, no where existing in the nature of things. I now proceed.

When the angels first received their being, and were created by God, whether they existed before, or were themselves a part of the "hexameron," or "six days' work of God," described by Moses in the beginning of Genesis, was a question disputed among the ancient Doctors, especially of the Greek Church. But the latter part of the question, viz. That the angels were created sometime within the six days, is now unanimously asserted by the generality of modern Divines, who produce very

clear reasons for their opinion, from the very history of the creation delivered by Moses. For although Moses doth not therein tell us, on what particular day of the six the angels were made, yet that they were created sometime within the compass of those six days which preceded the seventh, wherein "God rested from all His work," he seems plainly enough to teach us^e; "Thus the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them; and on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day, from all His work which He had made." Where we have evidently a general recapitulation of all the six days' works of God, described in the foregoing chapter; and in that recapitulation, not only the heaven, but also "all the host of heaven," is expressly mentioned.

Now what do other Scriptures teach us to understand by "all the host of heaven?" The whole host of heaven consists of two parts, "the visible," and "the intelligible host of heaven." The "visible host of heaven" are the "sun, moon," and "stars," those glorious lights of heaven which we behold with our eyes; for so they are called Deut. xvii. 3, and in divers other places. The "intelligible host of heaven" are the "angels," who are therefore frequently denoted by that appellation in the Holy Scriptures. So 1 Kings xxii. 19, "I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him, on His right hand, and on His left." So Psalm ciii. 20, 21, "Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Bless the Lord, all His hosts, ye ministers of His that do His pleasure." So Luke ii. 13, "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God," &c. But there is a place of Scripture that comprehends both those notions of the heavenly host together, and seems to be a plain comment on the text of Moses: you may find it in the ninth chapter of the book of Nehemiah^f, "Thou, even Thou art Lord alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; the sea and all that is therein; and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee." Where by "the

^e Gen. ii. 1, 2.^f Ver. 6.

heaven of heavens" doubtless is meant the highest heaven, called by St. Paul "the third heaven." And of this heaven, as well as of the inferior heavens, the starry and airy regions, it is said, that "God made them with all their host." Now the "host of the heaven of heavens," or the "highest heaven," are certainly the "angels;" the "host of the heaven" next under it, the "sun, moon," and "stars." But that "the host of the heaven of heavens," the "angels," are chiefly respected here, appears from the last words of the verse, "and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee;" which in the proper sense (from which there is no reason here to depart) is true only of the angelical host of heaven. When therefore Moses, in the place cited, tells us, that within the "six days," not only the earth with all things belonging thereunto, but also the heaven and "all the host" thereof were finished; we may with very great reason conclude, that he intended hereby to signify, that the "angels," being a part, and the chief part, of the heavenly host, were also created within the compass of those six days; although in what day of the six he had not before expressly told us, as indeed it is no where else in Scripture revealed unto us.

And we have the greater reason thus to conclude, because that Moses himself knew of the "heaven of heavens," or "the highest heaven," as appears from Deut. x. 14. "Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, are the Lord's thy God; the earth also, with all that therein is." And that the angels are God's host, we are taught by him also in this very book of Genesis⁸, where he relates an apparition of angels to Jacob in these words, "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him; and when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host."

This is farther confirmed from what follows in the place above cited, out of the second chapter of Genesis, wherein, after it had been said that "the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them," it is presently added, "and on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made." From whence it appears, that the heaven and the earth, and all the host of them, said then to be finished, are to

⁸ Chap. xxxii. 1, 2.

be understood in the most comprehensive latitude, as taking in all the work of God, "all that God hath made," *i. e.* all creatures, and therefore angels, they being unquestionably God's creatures, as I shall presently shew you; now it is plain, that the angels are not comprehended under the earth, and the host thereof; and therefore they must be contained in the mention of the heavenly host.

The same thing is clearly taught us in the words of the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, delivered also by Moses, wherein it is expressly affirmed, that "in six days God made heaven and earth, and all that in them is." Now, if within the six days God made all things that are in heaven, then within that time He made the angels, who have their habitation there, and are therefore very frequently in Scripture reckoned with the things in heaven.

But yet we need not much contend about this matter. It is sufficient for us to know and believe, (and so much we must believe,) that the angels are creatures of God, made by the "Eternal Word, or Son of God," and receiving from Him a beginning of being, before which they were not. This doctrine is most evidently delivered in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. In the 148th Psalm, after the Psalmist had invited all the things above, and among them the angels, to celebrate the divine praises, he presently adds concerning all of them alike^h, "Let them praise the Name of the Lord, for He commanded and they were created." But most full is the text out of the New Testamentⁱ; "For by Him" (*i. e.* the Son of God) "were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." And concerning this, there hath been always a perfect agreement in the Churches of Christ. Let us go on.

The angels were all created good and obedient to God, their and our supreme Lord. But divine Revelation teacheth us, that some of them "sinned^k," and "kept not their first estate, but

^h Verse 5.

^k 2 Pet. ii. 4.

ⁱ Col. i. 16, 17.

left their own habitation¹," and so became of the most glorious and blessed, the most vile and miserable of all creatures. What the sin was whereby they fell, and when they fell, are questions very hard, if not impossible, to be determined by any full and clear evidence of Scripture, and no way necessary for us to be resolved in; and therefore I think it best and safest to pass them by. Of this we are certain from Holy Writ, that there was a fallen angel before the fall of man, the devil, the first and chiefest of fallen angels, being man's tempter, under the form of a serpent, and therefore called "the old serpent," and "a murderer from the beginning^m." We are certain also from Scripture, that there are now a great multitude of evil angels, joined in association with, and headed by, that prince of darkness, and therefore called his angels, uniting their forces against God and goodness, and good men; enemies of mankind, troubling, disturbing, perverting, and corrupting this lower world, into which for their sin they are cast down from the regions of light and glory which they once possessed. Nay, the very heathens confessed this also, acknowledging bad as well as good genius's.

And the existence of those evil spirits is so evident from their evil operations in the world; in the *energumeni*, or persons possessed by them; in wizards and witches, their instruments, acknowledged by all ages and nations, and of which in our own age we have had some unquestionable instances; in their temptations on the minds of men, which are many times such, (especially that which is by Divines called *tentatio horrenda*, "the temptation of blasphemous thoughts," abhorred by the person who is continually molested with them,) that it is very apparent they proceed from some external, invisible, wicked agent injecting them; in the open, visible, and palpable tyranny, which they exercise at this day, in many parts of the world, where they are still worshipped. I say, that there are devils, or evil angels, is from hence so manifest, that he must needs be under a very strong and powerful delusion of the devil that shall deny it.

But my business at present is not to treat of the evil spirits; the subject of the proposition in my text being the good and holy and blessed angels of God, who persisted, and do still

¹ Jude, vcr. 6.

^m Rev. xii. 9; xx. 2; John viii. 44.

persist, in that integrity wherein they were at first created. Wherefore beseeching God to deliver our souls and our bodies from the power and policy, from the violent assaults and secret machinations, stratagems, and devices, of those wicked apostate spirits, let us leave them, and proceed in our discourse of the good angels, and consider,

II. Secondly, the predicate of the proposition in my text, or what is affirmed concerning them; viz. that they are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation." Whence we have, 1. The nature of the holy angels; they are "spirits." 2. Their state and condition with reference to God; they are "ministering," waiting, or serving "spirits." 3. Their office with relation to us; they are "sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation."

1. Here is the nature of the angels of God described in this word *πνεύματα*, "spirits." That is, they are not flesh and blood as we are, nor is their substance like any of those things that fall under our senses. Hence St. Paul, speaking of the enemies of our souls, the evil angels, (who differ not in their nature and essence, but only in the malice of their wills from the good angels,) saith, that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness" (or wicked spirits) "in high places".

It is indeed most certain that the angels of God are not such spirits, as God, blessed for ever, is; *i. e.* they are not *ὁμοούσιοι*, of the same nature and essence with God; for then they would be gods and not creatures, as we have before proved them to be. But we cannot so certainly and positively tell what kind of spirituality that of the angels is, whether it be void of all manner of corporeity, as modern Divines generally hold, or joined with some certain corporeity, not of the grosser sort, either fleshly, or airy, or fiery, but most subtle and pure, like that of the highest heaven, which is styled their *ἴδιον οἶκη-τῆριον*, their "proper habitation," as some of the ancient Doctors believed.

And indeed there is no necessity that we should be resolved in this matter. But this is most evident from the Scriptures, that of all created beings, the angels of God are the most subtle,

defecate, pure, active, and so the most perfect and noble substances. Hence they are described in Holy Writ, as creatures of wonderful agility and swiftness of motion^o, therefore called “cherubim,” *i. e.* winged creatures; and of as strange a subtlety penetrating into any kind of bodies, yea insinuating themselves into and affecting the very inward senses of men^p. As endowed with admirable efficacy and power^q. And lastly, as immortal beings, that have no principles of corruption within themselves, as unalterable at least as the pure heaven where they dwell, that can never die or perish, but by the hand of Him that first gave them being^r. This may suffice to have been spoken of the nature of the angels of God, of which we cannot hope to attain a clear and full knowledge, till we arrive to that blessed state, wherein, through the infinite grace and almighty power of God, we shall be made like unto them.

2. Let us next consider the state and condition of the holy angels with reference to God, signified by this, that they are styled *λειτουργικά*, “ministering,” *i. e.* waiting or serving, “spirits.” Ministering? to whom? not to us. For although they minister for our good, (as shall be shewn when we come to the third particular,) yet they are not our ministers or servants, (this would be intolerable arrogance for us creeping worms on earth to imagine,) but God’s. And God’s ministers, servants, and vassals they are, as His creatures, owing their being and all that they have or are to His bounty, and thereby obliged to pay Him all adoration, worship, service, and obedience. As high as they are in heaven, they do not sit upon the throne of the Divine Majesty there, but stand before it, humbly attending and waiting to receive the commands of the universal King, as they are often described in the Holy Scriptures. In a word, although the holy angels are the most excellent creatures, yet they are but creatures; and therefore we must not be so scared and dazzled with their excellence, as to fall down and worship them; but rather join with them in rendering all divine honour to the supreme God alone, to Whom we are fellowservants with them, although in a lower rank or station.

^o Psalm civ. 4.

^p Acts xii. 8; Matt. ii. 19; 1 Sam.

xvi. 15.

^q Psalm ciii. 20; 2 Kings xix. 35.

^r Luke xx. 36.

Hence the angel that appeared to St. John would not suffer him to fall down before him, for this reason, that he was his "fellow-servant^s;" "And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the face of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the Prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." Where three things are especially to be noted.

1. We may observe, that the angel styles himself the "fellow-servant," not only of St. John, and those other excellent men the Prophets, (who by their office and extraordinary mission from God were themselves after a sort made angels of God,) but universally "of them which keep the sayings of this book;" *i. e.* of all faithful, all truly pious men. So that if the meanest sincere servant of Christ had been in St. John's room, and done as he did, the angel would, after the same manner, have refused the honour done him, and for the same reason, because he was his "fellow-servant."

2. It is to be remarked, that the reason in the text extends itself to all manner of religious worship, whereby we subject ourselves as servants to the holy angels, even to that lower degree of religious worship, which the Papists call *cultum dulciæ*, "the worship of service." For this worship supposeth that we are servants to the angels; whereas the text expressly teacheth us, that we are not servants to them, but fellow-servants with them to the supreme God, to Whom alone therefore we ought with them to render all religious worship and service. And indeed it will be very evident to him that shall attentively consider the context, (especially the ninth verse of the preceding chapter, and the sixth verse of this,) that St. John all along did and could not but know the person that spake to him to be only an angel sent from God and His Son Christ, and not God the Father or Son Himself; and therefore could not intend to give him that sort of religious worship which the Romanists call *λατρείαν*, "worship," in the most absolute and perfect sense of the word, consisting in an acknowledgment of infinite excellency in the person worshipped, and therefore acknowledged by all to be due to the supreme God alone; but only

such a veneration, as, being as it were in a rapture, he thought he might not unfitly give, to testify his honour and gratitude to so glorious a messenger from God, who shewed him such wonderful things, and brought him such welcome tidings. And yet even this kind of worship, when offered by St. John, the angel refused, as unfit and unsafe for himself to receive and the other to give; as apt, being used, by insensible degrees to withdraw and alienate the minds of men from the due veneration of the supreme God, blessed for ever.

3. We may here see the mind and disposition of the holy angels of God, that, in all their intercourses with the sons of men, they seek not their own honour, but the honour and glory of Him that sends them; that then we please them best, and oblige them most, when they see us paying all religious worship and veneration to the blessed Trinity; and that on the other side, when we render any thing like that worship to themselves, we greatly offend and displease them.

The ancient Church of Christ well understood this, though the degenerate Church of Rome will not. For Origen^t, speaking the sense of the Christians in his time, in answer to Celsus, objecting the neglect of worshipping those spirits, that under God preside over affairs here below, as a faulty omission among Christians, tells him, "Although we know that not devils, (such as you worship,) but angels, are appointed to take care of the increase of the earth, and the generation of animals; we speak well of them indeed, and proclaim them blessed, but yet we give them not the honour due to God, because neither God would have us to do so, nor they themselves." And a few pages after^u, "There is only One whose favour we are to seek, viz. the supreme God; and the only way to obtain His favour, is by prayer and virtuous living. If, next to the supreme God, Celsus would have us to court the goodwill of those other powers that are under Him, let him consider, that as when the body moves, its shadow moves with it; so when a man hath obtained the favour of God, he consequently hath all the angels and saints for his friends." This he saith,

^t Orig. cont. Cels. viii. p. 416. [§. 57. ^u P. 420. [§. 64. p. 789.]
vol. i. p. 785.]

who in the same place presently after acknowledgeth, that "the angels are present at our prayers, and pray with and for us;" which plainly shews, that he thought the concernment of the holy angels in our devotions no good argument for us to withdraw any of our prayers from God, and to impart them to those blessed spirits.

So likewise in another place of the same work of his^c, having acknowledged, that "the angels do one while ascend to the highest heaven, and then again descend to men, with a return of the divine blessings," he presently subjoins, by way of caution, that "yet we are not to worship them;" adding this reason, "for all deprecations and prayers, and intercessions and thanksgivings, are to be directed to the supreme God, by the High-Priest that is above all angels, the living Word and God." If all prayers are to be directed to God the Father through His Son Christ, then no prayer is to be made to angels, or to God by them. But may we not call upon them to pray for us, and to do us those good offices to which we know they are appointed by God? No; not that neither. For he presently adds, that "we must not dare to pray unto any but God alone, because He alone is all-sufficient for us, through our Saviour His Son; and because our piety towards God, and our faith in His Son, is of itself sufficient to make the holy angels propitious to us, and to do all good offices for us," without our praying to them.

These places of Origen are so very express against all manner of veneration to the holy angels, that exceeds the thinking and speaking honourably of them, and revering their presence in our behaviour and conversation, that I cannot but wonder what should move the learned annotator^d on him, to go about to shew, that Origen notwithstanding prayed to his guardian angel. For proof whereof, he cites a place out of the first Homily of Origen, upon Ezekiel, where are these words, *Veni angele, suscipe sermone conversum ab errore pristino*, &c. i. e. "Come angel, take the convert into thy custody," &c. But that this is a gross mistake, will appear to any man that shall carefully consult the place: for Origen there (if it be

^c Lib. v. p. 233. [§. 4. p. 579.]

Celsum, p. 233. lin. 33.

^d Vid. Spenceri Notas ad lib. v. cont.

Origen and not his translator) directs his discourse to a convert to Christianity, coming to Baptism, or newly baptized: "Thou wert yesterday under the power of a devil, to-day thou art in the custody of an angel^e." And having cited some texts of Scripture to prove the ministry of angels over the faithful, by a rhetorical figure he introduceth the angels thus speaking among themselves, *Eia, omnes angeli descendamus e cælo, &c.* "Come, let us angels all descend from heaven," to visit the sons of men, as the Son of God Himself hath done. Then presently, continuing his rhetorical scheme, he adds, *Veni angele,* "Come angel, take the convert into thy custody." So that it is very manifest, Origen doth not there pray to his own guardian angel, but only in a strain of rhetoric invites the angel of the new convert to Christianity, to receive him into his care and protection.

A like mistake Grotius is guilty off, who would persuade us that Origen, notwithstanding those plain declarations of his mind, was not against all religious worship and invocation of angels, because he in another place^s tells Celsus, that it is perhaps lawful *θεραπεύειν* "to worship" the good angels, provided the word "worshipping" be understood in a purged and sound sense. But what is that refined sense of the word, wherein he allows the angels to be worshipped? He partly tells us afterward, in the same book, in the place already cited^b, viz. as the word may signify *εὐφημεῖν καὶ μακαρίζειν*, "to think and speak honourably of them, and to proclaim them blessed." Add hereunto, (what Origen also in many other places observes,) that "we are in all our actions, especially our religious actions to revere the presence of those holy inspectors over us, and to take care we do nothing that may offend and displease them," as hereafter shall be more fully shewn.

But as to the invocation of angels, to pray for us or help us, he every where universally rejects it, as neither pleasing to God nor the good angels themselves, nor agreeable to the practice of the Church in his time.

One would think indeed, that there were no more hurt in

^e Tu heri sub dæmonio eras, hodie sub angelo. [§. 7. vol. iii. p. 358.]

^f Grot. in Explicat. Decalogi ad Præcept. primum.

^s Orig. cont. Cels. viii. p. 386. [§. 13. p. 751.]

^b P. 416. [p. 785.]

praying to the angels to pray for us, they being ordinarily present with us here on earth, than for one Christian in this state of mortality, to desire the prayers of another in the same state, which is our common practice warranted by Scripture; but in truth, if we duly consider things, we shall find a vast disparity in these cases, as in many other respects, so especially in this.

When Christians conversing together on earth mutually desire the assistance of each other's prayers, they being by sense and experience thoroughly acquainted with their common humanity, and the frailty attending it, there is no danger of idolatry in the case; or that one should ascribe that to the other, which belongs to God alone. But if we mortal men were allowed to make such applications to the holy angels of God, the brightness of the acknowledged glory and excellence of their nature and office would be apt to dazzle the eyes of our minds, and consequently to fix our devotion on them, and withdraw it from God the Fountain of blessings; especially when we see them not, and so must be forced to address ourselves to them with the same faith and abstraction of mind as we do to the invisible God. So likewise if we were permitted to have recourse to the mediation of angels in our necessities and distresses, we should upon the same account too easily place our trust and confidence in them, and be taken off from our due dependence on the one only meritorious Mediator between God and man, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Sad experience and observation of things, where angel-worship is practised, assures us, that this is no vain imagination. Upon this account, among others, we are not allowed either by Scripture, or the custom of the Church in the purest ages of it, to ask the prayers of angels, as we desire the prayers of one another. There is great danger in doing so, but no necessity at all of doing it. For we need not stir up the remembrance, or excite the charity of those blessed spirits that watch over us; who are of themselves always readily inclined to do us all the good offices they can; and the more ready, as they see us more intent on the service and worship of God in Christ, the promoting whereof is their great design

and business here on earth. This is the plain sense of Origen, and of the Christians of his age.

A good while after Origen, Lactantius flourished, who discourses much to the same purpose, observing that the devils and evil spirits only seek for honour and worship from men; but that the good angels are averse from it, and will by no means admit of any religious honour or worship to be done unto them. "The angels," saith he, "though they are immortal, will not suffer themselves to be called gods; whose only office it is to be at God's beck, and to do nothing at all but what He commands them. Therefore they will have NO HONOUR given unto themselves, whose honour is in God. But the apostate spirits, being enemies to truth and sinners against God, endeavour to get unto themselves both the name and worship of godsⁱ."

In short, there is not one text in the Scriptures of the New Testament to warrant angel-worship; but, on the contrary, we have a very plain prohibition of it, not only in the particular case of St. John, but generally delivered by St. Paul^k; "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen," &c. Where the worshipping of angels condemned, being joined with voluntary humility, plainly enough signifies such worship of angels, as is performed under colour of humility, that is with this pretence, that it is a kind of presumption in us vile sinners to make our addresses immediately to the supreme God, by His eternal Son; and that therefore we ought in modesty to apply ourselves to the angels, the heavenly ministers, and by their merits and intercession to convey our petitions to the great King of heaven. And who sees not, that this is the very same angel-worship which the Papists at this day practise and defend, and that under the same colour and pretence?

And if we look to the ancient Church for at least three hundred years after Christ, it is evident from the testimonies of Origen and Lactantius but now cited, (the former writing about the middle of the third, the other in the beginning of the fourth century,) that there was no such thing as angel-worship

ⁱ Lact. ii. 17.

^k Col. ii. 18.

in those days among the Catholics. And for our farther confirmation it is to be observed, that in the Clementine Liturgy¹, (so called,) which is by the learned on all hands confessed to be very ancient, and to contain the order of worship observed in the eastern Churches before the times of Constantine, there is not one prayer to be found, from the beginning to the end of it, made either to angel or saint; (no not so much as any such prayer as this, O Michael, O Gabriel, or O Peter, O Paul, pray for us;) but all the prayers are directed to God in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, as they are (God be praised) in our Liturgy.

So that if the plain doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, and the declared sense of the primitive purest Churches of Christ, are to be regarded, we are certain, both that we ourselves are safe in not worshipping the angels of God, and that they of the Church of Rome sin and err greatly in their practice of such worship.

And so much of the second particular contained in the predicate of the proposition in my text, viz. The state and condition of the holy angels with reference to God. They are ministering spirits, servants with us to the supreme God, and therefore not to be worshipped by us with religious worship; no not with that lower sort of religious worship, which consists in praying unto them to recommend our prayers to Almighty God.

And if we must not make any such religious addresses to the holy angels, then certainly not to the saints departed. For besides that there is no warrant either in Scripture or the practice of the primitive Church, for the invocation of saints, any more than of angels, as hath been already intimated; we may also, from what hath been said against the worship of angels, farther argue with advantage against the invocation of saints, thus: The saints departed are not yet equal to angels, nor shall be till the resurrection, and then they shall, as our Saviour teacheth us^m; if, therefore, we must not make any religious application by way of prayer to the angels, as excellent creatures as they are, then much less to the saints departed. Again, we are sure from Scripture, that the angels are *ex officio*, by their office, ordinarily to be present with, and to attend upon, the faithful

¹ Apost. Constitut. lib. viii.

^m Luke xx. 36.

here on earth, as shall be more fully shewn in the sequel of this subject; and yet if we regard either the Holy Scriptures, or the sense of the primitive Church, we may not, we must not pray unto them; what reason can there be then for the invocation of the saints deceased, of whom the Holy Scriptures give us not the least assurance, that they are ordinarily present with us, nay in divers places seem not obscurely to teach the directly contrary?

I shall now proceed to the third and last thing affirmed of the angels, concerning their office with relation to us: that “they are sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation;” but that subject I shall leave to another opportunity.

Now to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

SERMON XII.

THE OFFICE OF THE HOLY ANGELS IN REFERENCE TO GOOD MEN;
BEING APPOINTED BY GOD AS THE MINISTERS OF HIS SPECIAL
PROVIDENCE TOWARDS THE FAITHFUL; AND WHEREIN THE AN-
GELICAL MINISTRY DOTI MORE ESPECIALLY CONSIST.

HEB. i. 14.

*Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for
them who shall be heirs of salvation?*

IN the entrance of my former discourse on this text I observed, that the negative interrogation or question therein propounded, is equivalent to this strong affirmative proposition, "That the holy angels of God are questionless all of them ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

In which proposition I considered, first, the subject, or persons spoken of, the holy angels. Where I proved, even by cogent reasons, that there are such noble beings as we call angels; and that they are very certainly creatures of God, most probably created sometime within those six days of the creation described by Moses in the beginning of Genesis, though on which of those six days, the Holy Scriptures no where plainly inform us.

In considering the predicate of the proposition, or what is therein affirmed of the holy angels, I have first discoursed of their nature, that they are "spirits;" and then of their state and condition with reference to God, that they are "ministering" or serving "spirits," doing homage with us to the supreme God and Lord of all things, and therefore by no means religiously to be worshipped by us.

It remains that I now proceed to the third and last particular in the second part of my text, concerning the office of the holy

angels in relation to us, viz. "That they are sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

This is to us the most useful part of the text, and therefore the more accurately and carefully to be considered by us.

The holy angels are spirits, ἀποστελλόμενα, sent from heaven above into this earth; what to do? Chiefly to minister to, or to do all good offices, both corporal and spiritual, "for them who shall be heirs of salvation," *i. e.* all truly faithful persons continuing such.

The providence of God in the government of this lower world, and therein more especially of the children of men, and most especially of those who love and fear Him, is in great part administered by the holy angels: these, as Philo terms them, are "the ears and eyes of the Universal King^a." The expression alludes to the government of earthly monarchs, who have their deputies or lieutenants in all parts of their dominion; who are, as it were, the eyes by which they see, and the hands by which they act. Not as if God needed the help of angels to oversee and act those things which His own knowledge and power cannot reach to, for He is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent; but this is spoken of God, ἀνθρωποπαθῶς, "after the manner of men," and must be understood, θεοπρεπῶς, "in a sense becoming the majesty of God." The rulers of this world have their deputies out of necessity, because they cannot govern without them; but the Universal King hath His ministers out of choice, because He is pleased for very good reasons to make use of them.

But as to Philo's expression, it seems to be borrowed from the Holy Scriptures, wherein the angels of God are expressly termed "the eyes of the Lord^b." So 2 Chron. xvi. 9; "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew themselves strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him." Indeed our translators here read "Himself;" but there is no such word in the Hebrew, and the supply might as well have been made by the word "themselves;" yea, so it ought to be made, if we will make sense of the words, with reference to "the eyes of the Lord" in the plural number pre-

^a Ὦτα καὶ ὀφθαλμοὶ Παμβασιλέως.

is repeated nearly word for word in

^b [Part of this and the following page Sermon XIX.]

ceding. However, that by "the eyes of the Lord" in that text are meant angels of God, is otherwise plain enough from the words themselves, which clearly express the every employment constantly attributed to the holy angels in Scripture, of being sent, "and running to and fro through the earth," to exercise their power in the protection and security of good and upright men. And the same is farther evident from other parallel texts of Scripture. In the fourth chapter of the prophecy of Zechariah^c, we have a vision of seven lamps in a golden candlestick. The interpretation of which vision is thus given^d; "Those seven, they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro throughout the whole earth." Now what those seven eyes of the Lord are, we learn clearly from St. John^e, where we have a vision of the Lamb, "having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth:" and those spirits he terms "angels^f;" "I saw the seven angels which stood before God." So again^g, we read of "seven spirits which are before God's throne," *i. e.* wait in His presence, do not sit upon, but stand before His throne, ready to receive His commands, and are therefore undoubtedly created spirits, *i. e.* angels.

For the understanding of which places we are to know, that the ancient Jews believed, that among the holy angels, those eyes of God and instruments of His watchful providence over us, there are seven (whereby perhaps they meant no more than a certain determinate number of) principal angels, as it were chief captains and commanders of the whole heavenly host. So in the ancient, though apocryphal book of Tobit^h, the angel Raphael is brought in thus speaking to Tobit and his son: "I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, — which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One." And that this was no vain speculation of the Jews, appears from those texts of canonical Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, which we have but now produced. But this by the way; I proceed.

That the holy angels are appointed by God, as the ministers of His special providence over the faithful, is plainly asserted

^c Verse 2.^d Verse 10.^e Rev. v. 6.^f Chap. viii. 2.^g Chap. i. 4.^h Chap. xii. 15.

in very many places of Scripture besides my text. So Psalm xxxiv. 7; "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." So Psalm xci. 9—12; "Because thou hast made the Lord which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." Yea, our Lord Himself assures us, that His little ones, those that imitate the innocence and humility of little children; *i. e.* all truly good men, have their angels in heaven to protect and defend them; and that therefore it is a very dangerous thing for any man to injure or offend themⁱ.

It is true indeed the good angels do not now ordinarily appear in visible forms, or speak by audible voices to men, as in ancient times they did. After God had once spoken unto men by His own Son, manifested in the flesh, and by Him fully revealed His will to the world, and confirmed that revelation by a long succession of unquestionable miracles, there was no such need of angelical appearances, for the instruction, confirmation, and consolation of the faithful. The succeeding ages do indeed afford us very credible relations of some such apparitions now and then; but ordinarily, I say, the government of angels over us is now administered in a secret and invisible manner. Hence too, too many have been inclined either flatly to deny, or at least to call in question, the truth of the doctrine we are now upon. But they have souls very much immersed in flesh, who can apprehend nothing but what touches and affects their senses; and they that follow this gross and sensual way of procedure, must at last necessarily fall into downright epicurism, to deny all particular providence of God over the sons of men, and to ascribe all events to those causes that are next to them.

But besides, although the ministry of angels be now for the most part invisible, yet to the observant it is not altogether indiscernible.

We may trace the footsteps of this secret providence over us in many instances, of which I shall note a few. How

ⁱ Matt. xviii. 10.

often may we have observed strong, lasting, and irresistible impulses upon our minds to do certain things we can scarce for the present tell why or wherefore, the reason and good success of which we afterwards plainly see? So, on the contrary, there are oftentimes sudden and unexpected accidents, as we call them, cast in our way, to divert us from certain enterprises we are just ready to engage in, the ill consequences whereof we do afterwards, but not till then, apprehend. Again, *Quantum est in subitis casibus ingenium!* "How strange many times are our present thoughts and suggestions in sudden and surprising dangers!" We then upon the spot resolve and determine as well as if we had a long time deliberated, and taken the best advice and counsel; and we ourselves afterwards wonder how such thoughts came into our minds. Hither also we may refer that lucky conspiracy of circumstances, which we sometimes experience in our affairs and business, otherwise of great difficulty; when we light upon the $\tau\acute{o}\ \nu\acute{\upsilon}\nu$, or "nick of opportunity;" when the persons, whose counsel or assistance we most need, strangely occur, and all things fall out according to our desire, but beyond our expectation. What strange ominous abodings and fears do many times on a sudden seize upon men of certain approaching evils, whereof at present there is no visible appearance! And have we not had some unquestionable instances of men not inclined to melancholy, strongly and unalterably persuaded of the near approach of their death, so as to be able punctually to tell the very day of it, when they have been in good health, and neither themselves nor their friends could discern any present natural cause for such a persuasion, and yet the event hath proved, that they were not mistaken? And although I am no doter on dreams, yet I verily believe, that some dreams are monitory, above the power of fancy, and impressed on us by some superior influence. For of such dreams, we have plain and undeniable instances in history, both sacred and profane, and in our own age and observation. Nor shall I so value the laughter of sceptics, and the scoffs of the Epicureans, as to be ashamed to profess, that I myself have had some convincing experiments of such impressions. Now it is no enthusiasm, but the best account that can be given of them, to ascribe these things to the

ministry of those invisible instruments of God's providence, that guide and govern our affairs and concerns, viz. the angels of God.

However it is most certain, that the holy angels are appointed by Divine Providence as the guardians of good men (as, and whilst they are such) in all their ways, and throughout the whole course of their lives. For of this, as you have heard, the Holy Scriptures (to which we have all the reason in the world to give credit) often and most expressly speak; and the wiser heathens themselves acknowledged as much, though they called those blessed instruments of God's providence over the virtuous by other names than we do, as by that of *boni genii*, "good genius's," and the like, as hath been before observed.

This theme of the angelical ministry is indeed very pregnant, and hath administered abundant matter to exercise the more curious wits, who have raised very many questions about it of more subtlety than profit.

But for my own part, being truly conscious to myself of my infirmity, and believing that what I discourse at this time of the ministry of the holy angels, I deliver in the presence of some of those heavenly ministers, I shall be very careful to keep myself within the bounds of modesty and sobriety. But there are three questions here, which I think may with some profit be discussed, and cannot well be passed over in silence. 1. Whether the office of ministering on earth, for the good of the faithful, belongs to the holy angels universally, even those of the highest order, or only to some certain angels of the inferior orders? 2. Whether every faithful person, during his life on earth, hath his particular guardian angel more constantly to preside and watch over him? 3. Wherein the angelical ministry, for the good of the faithful on earth, doth more especially consist? Of these questions I shall, by God's assistance, discourse in order, with all due reverence, and as the time will permit.

Quest. 1. Whether the office of ministering on earth, for the good of the faithful, belongs to the holy angels universally, even those of the highest order, or only to some certain angels of the inferior orders?

Aquinas and his followers, being led by the authority of the

counterfeit Dionysius, and some texts of Scripture that seem to favour him, have distinguished *inter assistentes et ministrantes angelos*, between those superior angels that always stand before the throne of God in heaven, and those inferior angels that are sent forth, as need requires, to minister for the faithful on earth. Which distinction being admitted, it follows, that some of the principal angels are wholly exempted from that ministry of which we are now discoursing.

Not to take any notice again of Dionysius, the places of Scripture on which this opinion is founded, are those wherein it is said of certain angels, that "they always behold the face of God" in heaven^k, and "stand before God^l." And to these texts of Scripture the patrons of this opinion add a reason or argument, drawn from the order of nature and grace, which, as they say, the angelical polity constantly retain and observe. According to which order, the inferior angels are always illuminated and instructed by the superior concerning those things that are to be done here below. So that the superior angels never go forth themselves by external mission, but only give the orders they have received from God to the inferior angels that minister under them, to be executed by them on earth.

But notwithstanding these fair colours put upon this opinion, we can by no means admit of it; but on the contrary we affirm, that although commonly and ordinarily the inferior angels are the immediate instruments of the Divine Providence over the faithful on earth; yet sometimes, extraordinarily and by the Divine dispensation, the superior angels also, even those of the highest order, are themselves sent forth by external mission to minister for the good of the faithful here below. For the negative interrogation in my text, which I have already noted to be equivalent to a vehement affirmation, is universal and unlimited, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth, &c.?"

And it is farther to be observed, that the manifest scope of the divine author in this chapter, is to assert the preeminence of the Son of God, not above some certain inferior angels only, but over the angels universally, even those of the highest

^k Matt. xviii. 10.

^l Dan. vii. 9, 10. Rev. viii. 2.

order and dignity. And among the proofs hereof alleged by him, this is one and the last, that whereas the Scripture speaks of the Son, as “sitting on the throne of God the Father, at His right hand,” and so as copartner with Him in the divine empire; the angels all of them are confessedly “ministering spirits, sent forth” at God’s pleasure to execute His commands on earth. As certain therefore as it is, that the Son of God is superior to all the angels, none excepted; so certain is it, that all the angels, without exception, are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for” the faithful on earth. This latter being the medium or argument whereby the divine author proves the former.

As for those texts of Scripture wherein it is said of certain angels, that they “stand before God,” they are of no force to prove that for which they are alleged, but rather prove the contrary. For “to stand before God” in those places, doth not signify that the angels who are said so to do always stand still in heaven, exempt from all ministerial offices here on earth, but rather serves to express their ministerial function. The phrase is metaphorical, and signifies no more than to appear, or be ready at hand, to serve another; as princes and magistrates have their officials attending them, to receive and execute their commands. Hence those very Scriptures that speak of certain angels, as “standing before God,” do plainly tell us, that those very angels are sent from heaven to earth, upon certain embassies and ministries committed to them. So the angel Gabriel, who appeared to Zechariah in the Temple upon the most weighty occasion of revealing to him the near approach of the coming of the Messias, and of His forerunner John the Baptist, who was to be born of his wife Elizabeth, tells him at the same time, “I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings^m.” And presently after, in the same chapter, the same angel is said to have been sent, and appeared to the blessed Virgin, of whom the Messias Himself was to be bornⁿ. So those seven principal angels or spirits of God, that are said in the Revelation of St. John “to stand before God,” are nevertheless in the same book said to be the

^m Luke i. 19.

ⁿ Ver. 26, 27.

“seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth^o.” And one of them, St. John seems to say, was “sent to himself^p.”

And then for the reason or argument to prove the exemption of the superior angels from ministering here below, taken from the order established and observed among the angels, according to which the superior angels act by the inferior, and the inferior under them, it is easily answered. For though this order be ordinarily kept and observed, as hath been before acknowledged, yet this hinders not, but that sometimes, and upon extraordinary occasions, it may be dispensed with. The order both of nature and grace among the holy angels is subservient to the Kingdom of Christ; and when any grand affair of that Kingdom requires, it may be altered. And if the Son of God Himself once vouchsafed to come down from heaven, being sent by His Father, and to be “incarnate for us men, and for our salvation;” it cannot be thought beneath the dignity of the most excellent angel to be sent by God from heaven, to do good offices for men on earth. And this may suffice to have been spoken to the first question; I proceed to the next.

Quest. 2. Whether every faithful person, during his life on earth, hath his particular guardian angel, more constantly to preside and watch over him?

I answer, The affirmative hath been a received opinion, and seems to be confirmed by some very considerable texts of Scripture.

1. It is an opinion that hath been entertained in former ages with a general consent, both among Jews and Christians, as hath been observed and fully proved by learned men^q; nay, the very heathens too had such a notion among them, though perhaps they went too far, assigning to every man his good genius universally. Thus Menander, “Every man, as soon as he is born, hath his genius to attend and assist him, as the good guide of his after-life^r.” And Arrianus upon Epictetus, speaking of God, saith^s, “He hath given to every man his peculiar

^o Chap. v. 6.

^p Chap. xvii. 1. [See also Job i. 6.

1 Kings xxii. 19.]

^q Vid. Petav. [De Angelis ii. 6, &c.

vol. iii. cd. 1700.]

^r [“Απαντι δαίμων ἀνδρὶ συμπαρίσταται

Εὐθὺς γενομένη μυσταγωγὸς τοῦ βίου
Ἄγαθός.]

^s Καὶ ἐπιτροπὸν ἐκάστῳ παρέστησε
τὸν ἐκάστου δαίμονα, καὶ παρέδωκε φυ-
λάσσειν αὐτὸν αὐτῷ, καὶ τοῦτον ἀκοίμη-
τον καὶ ἀπαραλόγιστον. [I. 14.]

genius, as his keeper or guardian, to whose custody he is delivered; and that a watchful guardian, that cannot by any means be withdrawn from the faithful discharge of his office."

2. As this opinion hath been generally received among Jews, Christians, and Heathens, so it seems to be favoured by divers texts of Scripture. I shall take notice of some of them, as the time will permit.

In the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew^s, our Saviour cautions all men to take heed, "how they offend any of His little ones that believe on Him;" subjoining this reason of that caution, "For I say unto you, their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven." They have their guardian angels to assist them, and to avenge all injuries done unto them; and therefore take heed how you offend them. The main force of the proof lies in the pronoun *αὐτῶν*, *THEIR angels*, which plainly intimates, that all Christ's little ones who believe in Him, *i. e.* all humble and faithful persons, have their proper angels assigned to them, as their guardians and protectors. And besides, we are to consider, (what the learned Grotius seasonably advises,) that the persons to whom our Saviour spake these words were Jews, and consequently that the words ought to be interpreted in such a sense, as may correspond with their conceptions and apprehensions. Now it is certain, (as I have already noted,) that the Jews generally believed every good man to have his genius or guardian angel more constantly to watch over him.

Another text, which seems plainly to countenance the opinion of guardian angels, is that known one in the twelfth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where we read, that St. Peter having been imprisoned by Herod, and being miraculously delivered out of prison by an angel, presently comes "to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many" Christians were met together unto prayer, and probably praying for St. Peter's deliverance; coming to this house, and knocking and desiring entrance, the maid that came to the door hearing and knowing his voice, and being surprised with joy and wonder at his unexpected coming, left the door shut as it was, and running back to the company, tells them that Peter

was at the door. But they being persuaded that Peter was at that time fast enough in his chains, slighted the maid's report, yea, and accused her of madness. But she soberly and constantly affirming, that it was even so as she had said; they then (supposing it impossible it should be Peter himself) make this conclusion, "It is his angel;" *i. e.* his guardian angel, assuming at that time his shape and voice. The whole story you may read, ver. 12—16. of that chapter.

They who tell us here that the word *ἄγγελος* may be translated "a messenger," and so be understood of a messenger sent by St. Peter from his prison, to give the brethren intelligence of his concerns, do, in my judgment, fasten an intolerably absurd sense upon the text. For with what reason, I beseech you, could those Christians imagine, that the maid, to whom the Apostle was so well known, (as the text itself expressly affirms,) should mistake a messenger from Peter, for Peter himself, especially after the maid had so positively and constantly affirmed, that she was sure it was Peter. Besides, if the Christian brethren, when they made this conclusion, "It is his angel," had meant only that it was a messenger from St. Peter, they would doubtless have presently either gone themselves, or sent the maid again to the door, to let in the messenger, that they might know what news he brought from the Apostle, about whom they were so solicitous. But this they did not, as the text plainly intimates, being under a consternation, till after the continual knocking of St. Peter; and then they took courage to go themselves and open the door.

Lastly, It is here again to be remembered, that the persons who spoke these words, "It is his angel," were Jews, and consequently that the words are to be understood as spoken *ex sententia Judæorum*, in a sense agreeable to the opinion of the Jews, who generally acknowledged such guardian angels, as hath been already more than once observed. This opinion they retained, after they had been taught the doctrine of Christianity; nor doth the holy text reflect any the least blame upon their opinion.

To these two texts out of the New, I shall add a third out of the Old Testament. It is in the fifth chapter of Ecclesiastes, where the Wise Man, having declared the necessity of keeping

all those lawful vows which we have once made unto God, how inconvenient soever they may afterwards appear to be^t, he enforceth what he had said^u, in these words, "Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou BEFORE THE ANGEL, It was an error; wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?" Where we have two very strong arguments to dissuade us from violating those vows we have once made to God; and an answer to an excuse which men commonly make to palliate that sin. The first argument is drawn from the danger of bringing thereby the judgment of God on our family, in these words, "Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin," *i. e.* (say some very learned interpreters, and I think most probably,) Do not, by making vows which thou afterwards violatest, bring sin, or the punishment of sin, upon thy children or posterity, which are thine one flesh. The second argument is taken from the curse which will certainly fall upon the estate of the offender in this kind, "Wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?" As if he had said, What a folly and madness is it in thee by uttering a vow with thy voice, which thou afterwards breakest in thy practice, to provoke Almighty God to destroy and blast that estate which was gotten by the work of thy hands, and is the fruit of thy labour! But because men are apt, notwithstanding, to excuse this grievous sin, by pretending that they were in an error, and did not well consider what they did when they made their vow; the Wise Man therefore obviates this excuse in these words: "Neither say thou before the angel, It was an error;" *i. e.* Do not seek out excuses to lessen thy fault; the angel of God was present when thou solemnly madest thy vow, and takes notice of thy breach of it, and shall be the instrument of the Divine justice in punishing it.

Here we have "the angel" in the singular number, not "the angels" in the plural, to denote some one certain angel; and then this angel is described, as the angel before whom and in whose presence the person vowing is, as the inspector and observer of his words and actions; which gives us the plain notion of a guardian angel. And, by the way, we may farther observe from this text, that it belongs to the office of our

^t Ver. 4, 5.^u Ver. 6.

guardian angel, not only to secure us from dangers, but to inspect and govern our actions, yea, and if need be, to chastise us when we transgress and prevaricate.

From these and the like texts of Scripture, seeming so plainly to favour the general belief of Jews, Christians, yea, and of the wiser Heathens; I cannot but judge it highly probable, that every faithful person, at least, hath his particular good genius or angel, appointed by God over him, as the guardian and guide of his life. But yet, if any man shall look on our inferences from those texts as not demonstrative, and shall modestly doubt of or dissent from so received an opinion, for my part I shall not quarrel with him, provided that in general he acknowledges the ministry of angels, for the good of those who "shall be heirs of salvation," as need shall require.

This is a truth by all means not only firmly to be believed, but also seriously to be considered, as being of great use and concernment to us. And so I pass to the third and last question propounded.

Quest. 3. Wherein the angelical ministry for the good of the faithful on earth doth more especially consist?

Answ. The ministry of the holy angels towards the children of God for their good and benefit, is in all respects opposed to the attempts of the devil and his wicked angels against them for their hurt and detriment. The devils spring their mines of mischief against good men, but the good angels countermine them. This opposition of the good against the evil angels, with reference to the faithful, is observable especially in these four things.

1. They continually watch over good men to preserve and keep them from corporal and outward evils and dangers, and to promote their temporal good. This the divine Psalmist seems especially to have respect unto in those words of his^x; "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." So, on the contrary, the wicked angels lie in wait to do hurt and

^x Psalm xci. 10—12.

mischief even to the bodies and temporal concerns of the faithful; as it plainly appears in Satan's dealing with Job: on whose sheep and servants he sent a fire out of the air to consume them; stirred up the Sabæans and Chaldæans to plunder his oxen, asses, and camels, and to kill his servants; raised a tempest to blow down his house and destroy his children; afflicted his body with grievous blotches and boils, from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head; and would, if God would have given him leave, have proceeded so far as to the taking away the life itself of that excellent person^γ.

The care and vigilance of the angels of light is employed in a direct opposition to these mischievous designs of the powers of darkness. They study to preserve and promote even the temporal safety, health and wealth, peace and prosperity, of the faithful. This we may learn again from the case of Job, before God thought fit by way of trial to permit the devil to afflict him; Satan then observed and envied his outward security and felicity, as appears from those words of his to God concerning him^z; "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not Thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land." The good man was then so fenced and secured on every side, in his person, goods, and relations, by the angels of God encamping round about him, that all the power, policy, and malice of the devil could not make a breach upon either of them, till God Himself prepared the way for him.

In short, God may and doth sometimes so far withdraw His guard of holy angels from the faithful, as to permit the devil to invade their temporal concerns; either for the exercise of their virtue, as in the case of Job, or for the prevention of their sin, as in the case of St. Paul, who had "a thorn in his flesh, the messenger of Satan," *i. e.* a sharp painful disease inflicted by Satan, with God's leave, on his body to keep him humble^a, or by way of punishment of some past great sin of theirs, which God will have them smart for in this world that they may not utterly perish in the world to come.

^γ Job i. 12.

^a 2 Cor. xii. 7.

^z Chap. i. 9, 10.

And happy is the man that gets to heaven at last, though the devil himself hath a hand, unwillingly, in driving him thither. It is a noble expression of the holy Apostolic Bishop and Martyr, Ignatius, to this purpose in his Epistle to the Romans^b: "Let the punishment of the devil come upon me, provided only I may obtain Jesus Christ."

But ordinarily, and excepting these cases, even the bodily and outward concerns of good men are secured by the ministry of the holy angels. This indeed is not their main business, their ministry being chiefly designed for the heirs of salvation as such, *i. e.* to promote especially their salvation, and their future eternal happiness. St. John, in his salutation to the Churches of Asia, wisheth them grace and peace, *i. e.* all spiritual as well as temporal good things, yea, spiritual good things especially; not only from God the Father, as the Fountain of them, and from Jesus Christ, as the only meritorious Mediator, Who hath obtained them for us; but also from the seven spirits or chief angels that are before the throne of God, as instruments of Divine Providence in dispensing both spiritual and temporal good things to the sons of men. Wherefore let us proceed to the other methods of the angelical ministry, more directly tending to our spiritual good and the salvation of our souls.

2. The good angels suggest to the faithful good thoughts and affections, and excite them to good works and actions. For as the evil spirits make it their business to inject evil thoughts into the minds of men, and to lay before them the occasions of sin; so, on the contrary, we need not doubt but that the good angels are as sedulous to put good motions into the faithful, to frustrate the snares of Satan, and to stir them up to good works. Satan put it into the heart of Judas to betray his Lord and Master^c. Satan filled the heart of Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to commit sacrilege^d. And in general it is said of the devil, that "he is the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience^e." Now have the evil angels this power over the thoughts of men for

^b Κόλασις τοῦ διαβόλου ἐπ' ἐμὲ ἐρχέσθω, μόνον κ. τ. λ. §. 5. p. 28.]
 μόνον ἵνα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπιτύχω. P. 59.
 ed. Vossii. [Cotelier reads κακαὶ κόλα-
 σεις τοῦ διαβόλου εἰς ἐμὲ ἐρχέσθωσαν,

^c John xiii. 27.

^d Acts v. 3.

^e Eph. ii. 2.

evil, and shall we think that the good angels have not as great an influence over them for good? or have the good angels less will to incline men to goodness, than the evil angels have to draw them to wickedness? Certainly no.

Indeed the eternal uncreated Spirit of God alone, the Holy Ghost, is the Author of our sanctification, the Infuser of the principle of divine life into us, Who only is able to overrule our wills, to penetrate the deepest secrets of our hearts, and to rectify our most inward faculties. But yet the good angels may, and often do, as instruments of the Divine goodness, powerfully operate upon our fancies and imaginations, and thereby prompt us to pious thoughts, affections, and actions. There is no man exercised in the ways of religion, but must have observed, that oftentimes on a sudden, he knows not how, most vigorous, powerful, affecting thoughts of eternity, and the great concerns of religion, have seized and possessed his soul; such affecting thoughts, as at other times, when he composeth and sets himself to think of those matters, he cannot without very great difficulty, if at all, command and retrieve. He hath observed also, that some times, when his thoughts have been employed and busied about quite other matters, he hath suddenly been called to his prayers, or minded and powerfully instigated to some good work to be done by him. For my part I question not, but that much of this is to be attributed to the ministry of the holy angels.

3. When the evil angels more violently assault the faithful by their temptations, the good angels presently step in, to succour, aid, and assist them, that they sink not under these temptations.

Our Saviour, "Who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin^f," is our example in this. He was tempted in the wilderness in a very astonishing manner, the devil violently seizing His body, and hurrying it up to a pinnacle of the Temple, and then again into an exceeding high mountain, and impetuously assaulting His mind with the most horrid temptations to tempt God, to commit idolatry, and the worst sort of it, the worship of the devil himself. But the good angels were all the while ready at hand, and, when they saw

^f Heb iv. 15.

their time, appeared and “ministered to Him,” as we read Matt. iv. 11; “Then the devil leaveth Him, and, behold, angels came and ministered to Him.” It is true, the good angels seem not by those words to have come in to our Saviour, till after He had single and alone vanquished all the assaults of the devil; because they knew His virtue to be impregnable, and in no danger of being overcome by temptations so foul and horrid. But yet as man, and in the state of humiliation, He was subject to the pure natural infirmities of mankind; and therefore needed food for His body after so long an abstinence, and refreshment to His mind after so dismal a conflict with the devil: for both these purposes we may well suppose the good angels came and ministered to Him. They “ministered to Him,” when tempted by the devil, all needful help and aid, and so they will to all the faithful, His members, who as they stand in need of a more timely assistance of God’s holy angels in their temptations, so they shall never fail to receive it.

Our Saviour again a little before His death was in a most dreadful agony; His “soul being exceeding sorrowful,” the anguish of His mind overflowing the channels of His body, and causing Him “to sweat great drops of blood^g.” There is little reason to doubt, but that Satan had some hand in this last anguish of our Saviour. For we must not think that the devil, after he had tempted our Lord in the wilderness, so left Him as never to return again to trouble Him more. Nay, St. Luke expressly obviates this conceit, when he tells us, the devil then “departed from Him for a season^h.” If he then departed from Him only “for a season,” we may be sure that this was not his last assault upon our Saviour. He set upon Him again afterwards, but especially and in the most pressing manner (as is most probable) in His last agony in the garden. But, behold, then “there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven strengthening Him,” as St. Luke assures usⁱ.

4. And lastly, The good angels take notice of the prayers and good works of good men on earth, and report, commemorate, and represent them before God in heaven. Just as, on

^g Mark xiv. 34. Luke xxii. 44.

ⁱ Chap. xxii. 13.

^h Luke iv. 13.

the contrary, the devil watches our sins and miscarriages, and is ready to charge us with them, and is therefore said to be “^kthe accuser of the brethren, accusing them before God day and night^l.” In the book of Tobit, (a book though not canonical yet very ancient, and always of good esteem in the Church of God, nor do I find that the truth of the story therein contained was ever denied by the ancient Jews or Christians,) the angel Raphael, revealing himself to Tobit, tells him^m, “When thou didst pray, and Sarah thy daughter-in-law, I did bring the remembrance of your prayers before the Holy One: and when thou didst bury the dead, I was with thee likewise. And when thou didst not delay to rise up and leave thy dinner, to go and cover the dead, thy good deed was not hid from me, but I was with thee.—I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.” However, that the doctrine of the angels reporting and representing our prayers and good works in the court of heaven is not apocryphal, is most certain.

In the Revelation of St. Johnⁿ, we read, “And another angel came and stood at the Altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the Throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.” Where Beza himself acknowledgeth, that by the angel is not meant Christ, (as some interpreters would persuade us, contrary to the plain sense of the text, especially if compared with its parallel text^o,) but a created angel; it being a part of the angelical ministry “to offer our prayers unto God daily^p.” To offer them? How? Not as mediators and intercessors, adding virtue to our prayers from their merits; for this belongs to our Saviour Christ alone, the only meritorious Mediator between God and man; (whence the incense perfuming the prayers of the saints is expressly noted to be given to the angel from another, not to be his own;) but

^k Rev. xii. 10.

^l Ὁ κατηγοροῦς τῶν ἀδελφῶν.

^m Chap. xii. 12. *et seq.*

ⁿ Chap. viii. 3, 4.

^o Chap. v. 8.

^p Preces nostras Deo quotidie offerre.

as messengers relating and reporting our prayers before God ; which is expressed in the place cited out of the book of Tobit, by the phrase of “bringing the remembrance of our prayers before the Holy One.”

So that these texts make not at all for the invocation of angels as our intercessors and advocates with God, as the Romanists foolishly imagine ; nay, they make plainly against it.

For, 1. The prayers in those places, said to be presented by the angels, are not prayers directed to the angels themselves, but prayers to God alone.

2. The angel in Tobit expressly advises him to pray unto and praise God only, and professedly disclaims whatever might be thought due to his merit or interest in the whole transaction, and declares himself no farther concerned, from first to last, than as “God’s servant and messenger^a ;” “And he said unto them, Fear not, for it shall go well with you ; praise God therefore. For not of any favour of mine, but by the will of our God, I come ; wherefore praise Him for ever.” And accordingly, as we find in the next chapter, Tobit presently addressed himself not to the angel, but to God alone, as he had always used to do, in a very excellent and devout form of prayer and thanksgiving.

But having said enough in my former discourse on this text, against the invocation of angels, I proceed.

From what our Saviour tells us, that “there is joy,” ἐν ὧπιον τῶν ἀγγέλων, “in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth^r,” it is plain, that the prayers and tears of the penitent are soon reported in the court of heaven among the holy angels ; and by whom can we conceive the report to be made, but by some of their own blessed society, carrying the welcome news from earth to heaven ? So when the angel told Cornelius, that “his prayers and alms were come up for a memorial before God^s,” we may reasonably suppose, that the angel who told him so, was the very person that “brought the remembrance of his prayers and alms before the Holy One,” to use again the phrase of the angel to Tobit, exactly answering to the speech of the angel to Cornelius.

^a Ver. 17, 18.

^s Acts x. 4.

^r Luke xv. 10.

Thus the holy angels of God are the observers of our prayers and good actions on earth, and the relators and remembrancers of them in heaven. Not but that the all-seeing God of Himself knows and takes notice of all the good actions of good men, and records them to perpetuity in the most faithful register of His omniscience; but He would have His holy angels to be conscious of our good actions, not only that they might congratulate our happiness as fellow-servants, and members with us under Christ, their and our Lord and Head; but also and especially that they might be witnesses of His righteous judgment at the last day, when His Son shall come in His glory, with millions of His holy angels, to judge the world.

Hence St. Paul, having particularly instructed his son Timothy, in all the principal duties of his Episcopal office, concludes his discourse with this solemn obtestation†; “I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things.” Where, having already appealed to God the Father and Son, he also adds, “the elect angels,” because they in the future judgment shall be present as witnesses with their Lord.

This may suffice to have spoken of “the holy angels, their existence, and their ministry;” their nature, their state, and condition, with reference to God, and their office in relation to us, all contained in those few words of my text, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” I come in the last place to a brief practical application of the whole discourse. The doctrine of the angels of God, as before explained and ascertained, serves for many excellent uses.

1. When we consider the certain existence of an infinite number of those most noble creatures, the angels, that have always inviolably observed the laws of their creation, and constantly persevered in the most faithful obedience and service of the great Creator, God blessed for ever; this consideration will mightily help to dispel and scatter those dark and cloudy thoughts of the Divine Providence, which are apt sometimes to arise within us, when we behold the lamentable corruption and apostasy of mankind.

† 1 Tim. v. 21.

Mankind was crippled in his cradle, and lost in the fall of the very first man, Adam. And when God in mercy renewed a covenant of grace with lapsed man in Christ, that covenant was also soon violated, and the world in process of time so utterly polluted with the most abominable wickedness, that nothing but an universal deluge of water, carrying away the whole race of men, (excepting only eight persons saved by miracle,) could cleanse it. How long afterwards was the worship of the true God shut up in one family of people, all the rest of the sons of men being overwhelmed with idolatry! And after the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour hath appeared to the world, and enlarged the bounds of God's Church, yet how many nations still "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death," having nothing to guide them but the light of nature, and some mangled relics of the primitive revelation; and yet the far greatest part of them will not be guided by these neither! And among those that outwardly profess the Gospel of Christ, how few are there who in their hearts and lives conform to the great fundamental rules and precepts of it! The consideration of this, if we looked no farther, would tempt us to think, that the end and design of God's creation is upon the matter frustrated and defeated.

But then, on the other side, we are to consider, that there have been a remnant of men in every age, that have yielded to and been recovered by the grace of God, who shall glorify Him, and be glorified by Him, to eternal ages. Which, though compared to the rest of mankind, that have perished in their own folly, they are but very few, yet taken by themselves, and all together, make up a vast body of men. God of His infinite mercy grant that we ourselves may be of that blessed number!

And we may farther consider, that besides us men, the great God hath an innumerable multitude of more excellent creatures, the holy angels, who have constantly and perseveringly glorified Him, and most faithfully served Him, who never yet sinned nor shall sin against Him. These owe their confirmation in virtue and bliss to the grace of the eternal Word and Son of God, as we do our redemption to His blood; and therefore they shall, together with elect men, sing praises "to Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for evermore."

When therefore we are troubled and offended to see how ill

things go here below; how vice triumphs, and virtue is dis-
countenanced, disgraced, and trampled upon; how the great
and good God is dishonoured and affronted, and His laws dis-
regarded and despised by the generality of men; what a vast
train of miserably deluded and self-deluding mortals the prince
of darkness draws after him into utter perdition. Let us then
look upwards, and view the heavenly regions above us, where
millions of millions of holy angels dwell. There the kingdom
of God is in its glory; there virtue shines in its full lustre and
brightness; there is no sin, no disorder; there all things go as
the great Creator would have them. And at the consummation
of all things, the whole number of faithful men of all ages, from
the beginning of the world, shall be added to the society of
good angels, and made like unto them; and both together
make up one Church perfectly triumphant; all wicked men and
angels being finally subdued. And there shall be “new heavens
and a new earth, wherein righteousness” and nothing but
righteousness “shall dwell.” *Ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου,*
“Let this Thy kingdom come,” O our heavenly Father!

2. When we consider what glorious beings the angels are,
and yet that they are but creatures of, and servants to, the God
whom we serve, waiting before His throne, and humbly
attending His commands; this consideration, if we let it sink
deeply into our hearts, must needs possess us with most awful
apprehensions of the glorious majesty of our God at all times,
but especially in our approaches to Him in His worship, and
fill us with the greatest reverence and humility. We should do
well often to call to mind Daniel’s vision, to whom was repre-
sented “the Ancient of days sitting upon His throne, a thou-
sand thousands ministering unto Him, and ten thousand times
ten thousand standing before Him^x,” and that of Isaiah^y, “I saw
the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His
train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each
one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with
twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And
one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the
Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.”

^x 2 Pet. iii. 12.

^y Dan. vii. 9, 10.

^z Chap. vi. 1—3.

With what reverence should we behave ourselves in our addresses to the Divine Majesty, before Whom the seraphims themselves hide their faces! And if they cover their feet, *i. e.* (say interpreters) are conscious to themselves (though not of any sin, yet) of their natural imbecility and imperfection, compared to the infinitely glorious God; how should we clods of earth, we vile sinners, blush and be ashamed in His presence, assuming no confidence to ourselves, but what is founded on the mercies of God, and the merits of our blessed Redeemer and Advocate, Jesus Christ!

And when we find ourselves inclined to pride and vanity, to think highly of ourselves and of our services to God, let us reflect at what a vast distance we come behind the holy angels; how far short our poor, lame, imperfect services, are of their holy and excellent ministry. Yet,

3. When we think of the ministry which the holy angels perform towards God, and for us; let us at the same time propound them to ourselves, as patterns and examples for our imitation.

As we daily pray, so we should continually labour and endeavour, that "God's will may be done in earth" by us, "as it is in heaven" by them. For although in this state of mortality, we shall never reach the perfection of angels, yet, by aspiring to it, we shall certainly become much better men; and if we come short of what we aim at, we shall nevertheless far exceed what we are. As therefore we hope to be equal to the angels (in a blessed immortality) hereafter, so let us study to be like them (in holiness and righteousness) now. Let us emulate their exalted love (the source and fountain of all the excellent services they perform) to their Creator, "by loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength^z." We have one reason to love God which the angels have not, and that is, the forgiveness of many and great sins; the most endearing obligation. And as they continually laud and praise the great and good God, and Lord of all things, so let us pay the daily tribute of our praises and thanksgivings to Him, according to our utmost powers in this state of infirmity. And when we consider their

^z Mark xii. 33.

ferrent love and charity to us, in their earnest desire and study of our good and welfare, and in their most ready diligence to do all good offices for us; let us then remember, how much more we are obliged to love and assist one another, who have the same common nature, passions, and infirmities, and therefore stand in mutual need of each other; whereas the holy angels are above any benefit or advantage, which any the best of us can contribute to them. Let us admire their condescension, in that they, being creatures so glorious, should so willingly stoop and humble themselves to minister to us sinful dust and ashes; and let us from hence learn that excellent lesson, "By love to serve one another^a," *i. e.* when charity requires it, not to disdain or refuse any good office we can do our neighbour, though it be otherwise servile, and seemingly beneath our dignity.

Thus the holy angels are our patterns.

4. The doctrine of the inspection of the angels of God over us, may serve to teach us a holy fear, circumspection, and caution in all our behaviour, even in our most secret recesses and retirements.

When we think ourselves alone, we are not so, but in the most reverend and awful society. Wherefore "in every place, in every corner, revere the presence of thy angel; and do not that before him, which thou wouldest be ashamed to do before a man like thyself^b."

You have heard how St. Paul, intending, as it were, to bind Timothy to the good behaviour in all the parts of his Episcopal office, charges him, not only before God and Christ, but also "before the elect angels," to be careful of his duty^c. Upon which text Mr. Calvin's note is observable, "He must be more stupid and senseless than a stock or stone, whose sloth and carelessness in his duty is not shaken off by this one consideration, that the government of the Church is the theatre of God and angels^d." Indeed, there is not the meanest member of the Church, but acts his part in that tremendous Presence.

^a Gal. v. 13.

^b In omni loco, in omni angulo, reverentiam exhibe tuo angelo; neque illo præsente facias, quod me præsente or besceres.

^c 1 Tim. v. 21.

^d Sane plusquam stupidum et saxum esse oportet, cui non excutiat torporem et oscitantiam sola hæc consideratio, theatrum Dei et angelorum esse Ecclesiæ gubernationem.

But this consideration should especially affect our souls, when we meet together in the houses of God, the places of His worship, wherein the holy angels (as the Church of God both before and after Christ always believed) assemble together with us. Hence the Psalmist, "I will praise Thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praises unto Thee. I will worship toward Thy holy Temple^e."

He conceived, that in his solemn worship towards the place of God's especial Presence, he worshipped not only before God, but also before "the gods." But who are they? The Septuagint tells us, by rendering the Hebrew words *ἐναντίον ἀγγέλων*, "over against" (*i. e.* before) "the angels." And to the same purpose is St. Chrysostom's paraphrase on the place, "I will strive to sing with the angels, contending with them, and joining in choir with the supernatural powers^f."

St. Paul, exhorting the Corinthian women to have a modest veil or covering over their heads in their religious assemblies, persuades them to that piece of reverence and decency by this very consideration, that they appeared in the presence of the angels. "For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head" (*i. e.* a veil or covering over her head, the sign of her husband's power over her) "because of the angels^g."

Alas! how little do they think of this, who sit or loll, and neither bow a knee, nor lift up an hand, nor move a lip at the public prayers, as if they bore no part in them; as indeed, till they mend their manners, they shall have no share in the benefit of them; who sleep, or talk with one another, or laugh, or suffer their eyes and thoughts to wander after vanity, when they should seriously attend to the Word of God read or preached to them! Methinks these men, though they regard not the angel on earth, the priest; though they have no respect to the congregation of faithful and devout Christians; yet should be awed into more reverence by the presence of the angels of heaven; and so indeed they would, if they believed and seriously considered it.

5. From the main thing in the text, the office of the holy

^e Psalm cxxxviii. 1, 2.

θέσθαι, καὶ συγχορεῦσαι ταῖς ἡγῶν ἐν-

^f Μετ' ἀγγέλων ἔδειν βιάσσομαι, καὶ ἰάμεσι.

φιλονεικήσω τὴν ἄμιλλαν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ^g [1 Cor. xi. 10.]

angels, whereby “they are sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,” we may understand the great goodness of God to good men, and the most happy and blessed estate of all the faithful.

This is the very use that David makes of the doctrine^h, where, having laid down this proposition, “The angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear Him, and delivereth themⁱ,” he thus applies it in the verse immediately following, “O taste and see that the Lord is gracious: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.” As if he had said, What a wonderful expression of the Divine goodness is this, that the glorious powers of heaven should thus attend upon us worms on earth; and how safe and happy must the good man needs be, under the conduct and protection of those wise, good, and mighty spirits! What need he fear either wicked men or devils, who is continually secured by so strong a guard! Who would not endeavour to be in the number of the faithful, and to be enrolled into so blessed a society! Indeed this should be our greatest care, to secure our being in a state of sincere piety, and then we are secure to all other purposes whatsoever, and need not take care about any thing else. “For who is he that will” (or can) “harm us, if we be followers of that which is good^k?”

We may then sit down in peace, and joyfully sing the song of the divine Psalmist^l, *Qui habitat in abscondito Altissimi*, &c. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my Refuge and my Fortress; my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.” But how comes the faithful person to be thus secure? the Psalmist tells us^m, “For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.”

What a mighty support and comfort will this be to us, if our consciences bear witness to our integrity, in all dangers, dis-

^h Psalm xxxiv.

ⁱ Ver. 7.

^k 1 Pet. iii. 12.

^l Psalm xci. 1, &c.

^m Ver. 11.

tresses, and necessities, yea, in our last extremity, and in the hour of death? For the good angels of God shall go along with us in the whole course of our lives, never leaving us till they have safely landed us in a happy eternity. When we are in our extreme agony, those blessed spirits shall minister to us, as they did to our Saviour in His; and when we breathe out our last, they shall watch our souls, that the wicked one may not touch them, and shall safely convey them into Abraham's bosom, where we shall be out of all danger for ever. Wherefore,

6. And lastly, Let all truly good men continually bless and praise God for this His unspeakable goodness to them. Let them hear the words of the Psalmist; "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart^p." "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright^q."

Let us conclude all with that excellent doxology of our Church in the Office of the Communion.

"It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, holy Father, Almighty, everlasting God."

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name, evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: glory be to Thee, O Lord most high." *Amen.*

^p Psalm xxxii. 10, 11.

^q xxxiii. 1.

SERMON XIII.^a

PREScribed FORMS OF PRAYER IN THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD,
PRACTISED FROM THE VERY BEGINNING OF CHRISTIANITY, AND
ARE NOT ONLY ANCIENT, BUT USEFUL AND NECESSARY UPON MANY
ACCOUNTS.

I TIM. ii. 1, 2.

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

ST. PAUL the Apostle had, in the foregoing chapter, given instructions to Bishop (or rather Archbishop) Timothy, concerning the regulation of preaching and preachers within his province, which was the proconsular Asia, of which Ephesus was the Metropolis. For so we read chapter the first of this Epistle^b; “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.” There were it seems some heterodox teachers within that province; and by the sequel it appears they were Judaizing doctors, who taught the observation of the Mosaic Law, as necessary to Christians, such as the Cerinthians and others. For so we read^c, “The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain janglings; desiring to be teachers of the Law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.” Hence in the following verses he shews, against those heterodox teachers, the right

^a [This Sermon was composed after the Restoration, when the Liturgy was again in use.]

^b Ver. 3.

^c Ver. 5—7.

use of the Law, and also sets forth the grace of the Gospel, which should be the principal subject of all Gospel preaching.

Now the Apostle having thus instructed Timothy as to the matter of preaching and preachers, he proceeds in the next place to give him farther orders, concerning other Ecclesiastical matters; and first of all and chiefly concerning the public and common Prayers of the Church, in the words of my text: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and all that are in authority; that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty:" *πρῶτον πάντων*, "first of all;" which words, as Estius well notes, are to be understood, not of a priority of time, but of dignity; in the same sense, as our Saviour in the Gospel bids us seek, *πρῶτον*, "first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness^c."

Prayer is the principal and most noble part of God's worship, and to be preferred before preaching: nay indeed, to speak strictly and properly, preaching is no part of divine worship; for every proper act of divine worship must have God for its immediate object, and God's glory for its immediate end. But the immediate object of preaching are men, to whom it is directed, and the immediate end of it is the instruction of men; though it is true, in the ultimate end of it, it tends to, and ends in the glory of God, as indeed all religious actions do, and all our other actions of moment should do. But prayer is immediately directed to God Himself, and it is an immediate glorification of Him, and a paying of divine worship and honour to Him. In a word, by preaching we are taught how to worship God; but prayer is itself God's worship. Hence the place of God's worship is styled by our Saviour *οἶκος προσευχῆς*, "the house of prayer^d." It is not called a "preaching house," (though there must be preaching there too at due times and seasons,) but a "house of prayer," because prayer is the principal worship of God, to which all religious houses are dedicated, and it is the constant and daily business to be performed in them. No wonder, therefore, that the Apostle charges Timothy to take a special care concerning the Liturgy and Public Prayers of the Church, that they be duly and rightly performed: "I

^c Matt. vi. 33.

^d Matt. xxi. 13.

exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made," &c.

The text is an order or injunction given by St. Paul to Timothy, a Bishop of the Church, concerning the public and common prayers to be used in the several Churches and Congregations under his care and jurisdiction. That Timothy was a Bishop, and Bishop of Ephesus, the metropolis or chief city of Asia, is so fully attested by all antiquity, that he must be either very ignorant or very shameless that shall deny it; especially there being besides very plain evidences of the Episcopal power and authority wherewith he was invested, in this very Epistle of St. Paul written to him. Such is that in the first chapter^e, already upon another account cited; "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine." He had therefore a power invested in him of calling to account the Presbyters and Teachers within the Diocese of Ephesus, concerning their preaching and doctrine, which is certainly a branch of Episcopal power. We read also in the same Epistle, that he was appointed as a judge of the Presbyters of Ephesus, to hear and determine those cases that concerned them^f: "Against an Elder" (or Presbyter) "receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." He had also the power of Ordination, (which being added to the former, makes up the complete Episcopal power and authority,) as may be plainly gathered from the caution given him by St. Paul to use that power aright; ver. 22. of the but now mentioned chapter: "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."

To this public person, to this great Bishop of the Church, is this charge given by St. Paul in my text: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men," &c. He was to take care that such prayers should be made in all Churches and Congregations under his inspection and jurisdiction.

And how could he do this, but by providing by his authority that there should be set forms of prayer, framed according to this rule given him by the Apostle, to be used in those Churches? Sure I am, the primitive Catholic Church under-

^e Ver. 3.

^f Chap. v. 19.

stood this to be the meaning of the Apostle. Hence in all the Churches of Christ over the world, however distant from each other, we find set forms of public prayers, suited and conform to this direction of the Apostle. This was observed by the ancient author of the book concerning the calling of the Gentiles, attributed to Prosper, who occasionally citing the words of my text, hath this note upon it: "This law and rule of prayer hath been so religiously and unanimously observed by all Christian Priests and people, that there is no part or quarter of the world, wherein there are not forms of prayer suited and agreeable to this pattern^f."

And indeed, if we consult all the ancient Liturgies extant at this day, we shall find this observation to be most true; they are all framed and composed according to this rule of the Apostle.

And it is observable, that however those ancient Liturgies have been altered and corrupted in aftertimes by many additions and interpolations, yet there are in all of them still remaining many excellent and divine forms of prayer and thanksgiving, wherein they do all perfectly agree, and which therefore cannot reasonably be thought to have any other original than apostolical order and appointment, delivered to the several nations and people, together with the first preaching and plantation of Christianity among them. Such, for example, is the *Sursum corda* in the Office of the Communion, the Priest saying, "Lift up your hearts;" and the people answering, "We lift them up unto the Lord^g." There is no Liturgy in any Church of Christ to this day but hath this form. Such is the excellent form of thanksgiving in the same Office of the Communion, to be performed by the Priest and people; the Priest saying, "Let us give thanks unto our Lord God;" and the people answering, "It is meet and right so to do^h." This form also is to be found in all the most ancient Liturgies.

^f Hanc legem supplicationis ita omnium sacerdotum et omnium fidelium devotio concorditer tenet, ut nulla pars mundi sit in quo hujusmodi orationes non celebrentur a populis Christianis.

^g [The Apostolical Constitutions mention Ἀνω τὸν νοῦν, et Ἐχομεν πρὸς τὸν Κύριον. viii. 12. Cyprian says, Sacerdos ante orationem præfatione

præmissa parat fratrum mentes dicendo, *Sursum corda*—respondet plebs, *Habemus ad Dominum*. De Orat. Dom. p. 213.]

^h [In the Apostolical Constitutions we find Εὐχαριστήσωμεν τῷ Κυρίῳ—ἄξιον καὶ δίκαιον—ἄξιον ὡς ἀληθῶς καὶ δίκαιον πρὸ παντῶν ἀννυμεῖν κ. τ. λ. viii. 12.]

Such also is the doxology or glorification of the ever-blessed Trinity: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." For they are much mistaken who think that this form was first set up in the Church of Christ against the Arian heresy: it was in use in the Churches of Christ from the beginning. Hence Justin Martyr, who lived very near to the Apostolic age, in his second Apology towards the end setting forth the public worship of Christians in his time, tells usⁱ, "In all our oblations" (*i. e.* in all our Eucharists) "we bless and praise the Maker of all things, by His Son Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Ghost." And the Christians of Smyrna, in their Epistle to the Church of Philomelia, (extant in Eusebius^k), concerning the martyrdom of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John the Apostle, of which they were eyewitnesses, tell us, that blessed Martyr in his last prayer at the stake used this form^l: "I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, by the eternal High-Priest Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, by Whom to Thee, together with Him, in the Holy Ghost, be glory now and for ever, Amen." And the brethren of Smyrna themselves thus conclude their Epistle, "We bid you farewell in our Lord Jesus^m, with Whom be glory to God the Father and to the Holy Ghost." Hence in the Apostolical Constitutions, wherein we have certainly the best account of the primitive Liturgy of the Eastern Churches, we find this full doxology": "To Thee, O Father, and to Thy Son Christ our Lord, and God, and King, and to the Holy Ghost, be glory, praise, majesty, adoration, and worship, now and to eternal ages, Amen." So that if this form of doxology had an occasional original upon the account of any heresy that denied the faith of the holy Trinity, it was at first designed against the Cerinthians and Ebionites, who disturbed the Church of Christ in the very age of the Apostles, and denied the Divinity of our Lord, and consequently oppugned the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, no less than the Arians afterward did.

But the truth is, this doxology was not occasionally taken

ⁱ Ἐπὶ πᾶσι τε οἷς προσφερόμεθα, ἐνλογοῦμεν τὸν ποιητὴν τῶν πάντων διὰ τοῦ Τιοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ διὰ Πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου. [Apol. 1. 67. p. 83.]

^k [Lib. iv. c. 15.]

^l Σὲ αἰνῶ, σὲ εὐλογῶ, σὲ δοξάζω, &c.

^m Μεθ' οὗ δόξα τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ καὶ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι.

ⁿ Σοὶ δόξα, &c. [viii. 15.]

up in opposition to any heresy, but is an essential part of Christian worship, necessary to be used always by all Christians, if there had never been any heresy in the world. For all Christians are baptized in, or into, "the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," *i. e.* into the faith, service, and worship of the holy Trinity, and so from their very Baptism are obliged to render and give to each person divine worship and adoration. Indeed this is the main difference between the worship of Christians and Jews; the Jews worship God as one single person, acknowledging neither Son, nor personal Holy Ghost subsisting in the Divine nature. But we Christians worship God in a Trinity of Persons and Unity of Essence, "God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God."

I add, to what hath been already observed, the consent of all the Christian Churches in the world, however distant from each other, in the prayer of oblation of the Christian sacrifice in the Holy Eucharist, or sacrament of the Lord's Supper; which consent is indeed wonderful. All the ancient Liturgies agree in this form of prayer, almost in the same words, but fully and exactly in the same sense, order, and method; which whosoever attentively considers, must be convinced that this order of prayer was delivered to the several Churches in the very first plantation and settlement of them. Nay, it is observable, that this form of prayer is still retained in the very Canon of the Mass, at this day used in the Church of Rome, though the form doth manifestly contradict and overthrow some of the principal articles of their new faith. For from this very form of prayer, still extant in their Canon, a man may effectually refute those two main doctrines of their Church, the doctrine of Purgatory, and that of Transubstantiation, as I could clearly shew you, if I had time, and this were a proper place for it. Thus by a singular providence of God, that ancient, primitive, and apostolic form of prayer still remains in the Liturgy of that Church, as a convincing testimony against her latter innovations and corruptions of the Christian doctrine. But this by the way.

The same harmony and consent of the ancient Liturgies is to be found in the Office of Baptism, where the person to be

baptized is obliged first to “renounce the devil and all his works, the pomp and vanity of the world,” &c. and then to profess his faith in the Holy Trinity, “God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost^o.” This form is to be found in the Liturgies of all the Churches of Christ throughout the world, almost in the very same words, and is therefore doubtless of primitive and apostolical original. They called the former part of this form ἀπόταξις, “the abrenunciation,” viz. of the devil, and all those idols wherein the devil was worshipped among the heathens. The latter part of the form was called σύνταξις, “the aggregation,” or joining of one’s self to the worship and service of the only true God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Other instances of the like nature I could give you, if the time would permit. But these I think are sufficient to shew that there were set, prescribed offices and forms of prayer and praise, and profession of faith, delivered to all the Churches of Christ by the Apostles or their immediate successors; many of those forms (notwithstanding the manifold corruptions and depravations of the primitive Liturgies in aftertimes) being still retained, and unanimously used in all the Churches of Christ to this day.

Indeed the exercise of the public worship of God in set and prescribed forms of prayer, hath been the practice of all settled Churches of God, not only ever since Christianity, but also before our Saviour’s coming into the world. All the learned know, that the ancient Church of the Jews before Christ had set forms of prayer, which they used in their temple and synagogues, as also the Jews have at this day. And indeed many of those forms are very good and excellent, and have no other fault to be found in them, but that they do not end, as the prayers of us Christians do, “through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Nay, it is very observable, that our Lord Christ Himself, when He recommended to His disciples, upon their desire, a prayer to be used by them, (that which we call “The Lord’s Prayer,”) He did not frame an entirely new prayer, in words of His own conception, but took out of the ancient euchologies, or prayer-books of the Jews, what was

^o [This may be seen in Tertullian, Baptismo, c. 6, 11. Hippolytus, in de Spectac. c. 4. de Corona, c. 3. de Theophân. c. ult. Cyprian, Epist. 70, 76.]

good and laudable in them, and out of them composed that prayer. The very preface of the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father, which art in heaven," was the usual preface of the Jewish prayers. And all the following petitions are to be found almost in the very same words in their prayer-books.

He that doubts of this, if he understands the learned languages, may be satisfied by consulting Drusius and Capellus, in their notes upon the sixth chapter of St. Matthew, the ninth and following verses. And the reflection of the learned Grotius upon this is very remarkable: "So far was the Lord Himself of the Christian Church from all affectation of unnecessary novelty^p." Our Saviour in this instance hath plainly shewn us, what respect we ought to have for forms of prayer anciently received and approved by the Church of God. And indeed it were no difficult thing to shew, that many of the offices and forms of prayer, and other religious institutions received in the Church of Christ, are in their first original to be referred as due to the piety and devotion of the Church of God before the coming of Christ in the flesh; Christianity being no innovation, but only the perfection of the old religion; and it being the same Spirit of Christ that governed the Church of God, both under the Old and New Testament.

You have seen what a mighty prescription we can plead for set and prescribed forms of prayer in the public worship of God. I add, that we have very strong reasons to back this prescription. Set and prescribed forms of prayer in the public worship of God are useful, yea and necessary, upon many, but especially upon these following accounts.

1. They are useful and necessary to obviate and prevent all extravagant levities, or worser impieties in the public worship. If the prayers of the Church were left to the private conceptions or extemporary effusions of every Minister of the Church, what a lamentable worship and service of God should we have in many congregations! We had sad experience of this in those days, when our Liturgy was laid aside; what impertinencies, what tautologies, what bold and familiar addresses to the Divine Majesty! what saucy expostulations with Almighty God! yea

^p Tam longe abfuit ipse Dominus sariæ novitatis.
Ecclesiæ ab omni affectatione non neces-

what blasphemies were heard in the houses of God from the men of those times!

And it is observable, that those impertinencies, yea and impieties, were incident, not only to the meaner sort of the dissenters from our Liturgy, but even to the principal men and chief leaders among them: of which I could give you some sad instances, but that I delight not to rake in that dunghill. Indeed the public prayers were in those days in many places so absurd and ridiculous, that by them religion itself was exposed to the scorn and contempt of the irreligious. And I am apt to think that from hence, as one main cause, first proceeded that irreligion and atheism which hath since overspread our sinful nation. For enthusiasm commonly leads the way to atheism, and a fanatic religion too often ends at last in no religion.

2. Set and prescribed forms of prayer are necessary in the public worship of God, that Ministers less learned may have provision of devotions made for them. It is a true saying, "In every sort of men and professions, there are some vulgar and lesser men^a;" the Clergy itself not excepted: among whom (it is a truth not to be dissembled) the less learned have been, and I fear always will be, the greater number.

Now it cannot by any considering man be thought reasonable or expedient, that the solemn worship of God, in the congregations over which they preside, especially the administration of the holy Sacraments, should be entrusted to their discretion and abilities. Nay, I might add, (what a great man hath well observed,) that a prescribed Liturgy may be as necessary for more learned Ministers, that they may have no occasion of ostentation ministered to them, lest their best actions, their prayers, be turned into sin and vanity.

3. Set and prescribed forms of prayer in the public worship, are necessary also for this end, that all the members of the Church may know the condition of public Communion, and understand beforehand what prayers they are to join in; which they cannot do without a public and prescribed Liturgy. If a man come into a congregation, where the Minister is left to pray as he pleases, he cannot immediately join with him in

^a Omne genus hominum habet suum vulgus.

prayer, unless he have an implicit, that is, a foolish faith and confidence in the person that prays: he cannot reasonably direct his devotion immediately to God, but must first take time to hearken and consider, whether the prayers of the Minister be such as he may safely and heartily join in; which great inconvenience is taken away by forms of prayer, prepared and provided beforehand by the wisdom of the Church.

4. And lastly, Prescribed prayers in the Church are necessary to secure the established doctrine and faith of the Church. If the Ministers of the Church be left to themselves, to pray as they list, they will be very apt (and it will be very difficult for them to avoid it) to vent their own private opinions and notions in points of religion in their prayers; for men will pray as they think and believe, and all their doctrines will have a tincture of their private notions and conceptions, which may not be always sound and orthodox.

Heterodoxes, false doctrines, yea, and heresies, may be propagated by prayer as well as preaching, and by the former perhaps more effectually than by the latter. For when poor ignorant people shall hear their Minister venting a notion in his address to Almighty God, they will be apt to conclude, and not without reason, that he is fully assured of the truth of it, yea, that he hath very good grounds for it, or else he would not dare to utter it to the face of God Himself. And thus the confidence of the Minister easily at first begets in the simple hearer a good opinion of it, which by degrees grows to a stedfast belief and persuasion.

But now, on the other side, set forms of prayer, composed and prescribed by the wisdom of the Church, are an excellent defence and security against innovations in faith. For to be sure the Church will take care that her Liturgy and Common Prayers shall not contradict or interfere with her Articles of Religion, but rather confirm them, and by prudent methods, insinuate the knowledge and belief of them into the hearers. Indeed, the ancient Liturgies were so framed, that they were a kind of systems of orthodox divinity, and antidotes against heresy. And in this, the Liturgy of our Church comes behind none of the ancient Liturgies. For therein we are obliged to confess the faith of all the ancient Creeds. But more especially

our frequent doxologies to the most holy and ever-blessed Trinity, do abundantly secure us against Arianism and Socinianism, the prevailing heresies of our unhappy times, and of all other heresies the most dangerous. In short, no heretic can heartily join in the offices of prayer and praise, and confessions of faith, prescribed in the Liturgy of our Church.

But, on the other side, in those congregations where there is no prescribed Liturgy, or office of public prayer, no creed or confession of faith to be rehearsed, all sorts of heretics may easily, and without discovery, find shelter to themselves. Which is one and the main reason, I doubt not, why at this day, the Arians and Socinians among us are all declared enemies to the public worship of the Church of England, as it is by law established, and shake hands with the dissenters. For they know full well, that as long as our Liturgy stands, their heresies can never prevail; all the members of our Church being obliged in their daily public devotions solemnly to declare against those heresies.

I shall conclude all with a word or two of application.

1. From what hath been said, we may take occasion, and we have very good ground and reason, to reprove the gross error and folly of those, who are against all set and prescribed forms of prayer in the public worship of God, and, upon the account of such forms used in our Church, separate from the Communion of it.

These men must upon the same account have been separatists and schismatics, if they had lived in any other settled Church of Christ since the days of the Apostles. For you have seen, that this order and injunction given to Bishop Timothy in my text, to take care, and provide by his authority, that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, should be made for all men," in all the Churches and Congregations under his care and inspection, was observed by him, and all the other Bishops of the primitive Church, by causing such forms of prayer to be made and composed for the use of their several Churches; and that, accordingly, the same order of the Apostle was observed after the same manner in the Catholic Church throughout all succeeding ages. The exercise of the public worship being never in any age of the Church (before this

latter age of innovation) permitted and entrusted to the discretion and abilities of every private Minister.

So that to those who cry up the private conceptions, or extemporary effusions of their Ministers, in opposition to set forms of prayer, prescribed by the wisdom of the Church in the public worship of God, we may answer with the Apostle^r, "We have no such custom, nor the Churches of God." And if this be not a good and satisfactory answer, they must be so daring as to say, that the great Apostle of Christ was mistaken in his logic, and argued from a wrong and fallacious topic.

And whereas they pretend they cannot edify by such set forms of prayer, nor find any warmth of devotion in the use of them, they do thereby represent themselves under a very ill character, that they are men of a spirit and temper very disagreeable, and different from that spirit that hath always governed the Catholic Church of Christ. They cannot heartily serve and worship God in such a way as the primitive Confessors and Martyrs, and all good Christians for many succeeding ages did.

But I will not be so severe as to condemn all those as no good Christians who make this plea. I do not doubt but some of them are men of good intentions, and pious dispositions and affections; and if they had not been prejudiced and imposed upon by their deluding teachers, they would have been of another temper. But they have been taught by those deceivers, that prescribed forms of prayer are a stinting of the Spirit; their heads have been filled with harangues and discourses concerning the gift and spirit of prayer, which, they have been told, consists not only in pious and holy affections, but also in a variety and volubility of words and expressions; and consequently, that a set form of prayer and the spirit of prayer are inconsistent; which is in effect to say, that a man cannot make use of any of the penitential Psalms, nor any other forms of prayer or praise in the divine Book of Psalms, nor rehearse even the Lord's Prayer itself, with the spirit of prayer; which to affirm is the height of madness.

But the poor souls labouring under this prejudice, it is no wonder if they flee from our Liturgy, as from a serpent or

scorpion; no wonder that, when they are forced occasionally to be present at it, they are not at all affected with it; nay, on the contrary, find an aversation of their spirits from it.

Woe be to the men that have thus abused those poor souls, or rather those precious souls, for whom our Lord Christ died, and shed His most precious blood! that by such silly pretences have drawn them into schism, and a sinful separation from the communion of the best of Churches.

But there are some of our dissenters that pretend that they are not against all set forms of prayer, nor do they dislike our Liturgy, merely as it is a set and prescribed form of prayer; but because there are some, yea, very many things in it, that are not agreeable to the Word of God, and to which therefore they cannot assent. Now to these men all that I have at present to say is this; I will not be so lavish or extravagant in the praise of our Liturgy, as to say it is an absolutely perfect form of prayer, or so good as not to be capable in some respects to be made better; for this were in effect to say, it is more than a human composition: but this I do aver, that there is no passage in it, but what admits of a fair and candid interpretation; that there is nothing in it directly sinful, or such as that upon the account thereof a man might justify his separation from the communion of our Church. This hath been again and again unanswerably proved by the learned men of our Church. And as to the main body of our Liturgy, it is a most excellent office and form of prayer, most agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, that comes nearest to the primitive Liturgies; and, in a word, is the best Liturgy at this day extant in the Christian world.

But indeed it is a mere pretence of our dissenters when they say they are not against a set and prescribed form of prayer in the public worship, and that they only dislike some passages in our Liturgy. For if this were true, why do they not in their congregations use our Liturgy, omitting those passages in it, at which they pretend to be offended? Or, at least, why do they not compose a Liturgy of their own? It is plain therefore and evident, that they are really against all set and prescribed forms of prayer in the public worship, be they otherwise never so blameless; and consequently, that they oppose therein the con-

sent and the unanimous practice of the Catholic Church of Christ.

This I had to say to our dissenters. But,

2. What we have said concerning prescribed forms of prayer, as always from the days of the Apostles used in all settled Churches of Christ, may administer abundant satisfaction and confirmation to all that adhere to the communion of the Church of England, and consequently to the Liturgy and Form of Prayer prescribed in that Church.

This may be our comfort, that we serve and worship God in the same way that the primitive Confessors and Martyrs, and all good Christians in the succeeding ages did.

We have a Liturgy conform to this law and rule of prayer laid down by the Apostle in my text, and observed by the Catholic Church. We have good and wholesome supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving, not only for ourselves, but for all men.

Those excellent men, our first Reformers, took care to retain and preserve what was primitive and good in the Liturgies of other Churches, and to pare off all excrescences and adventitious corruptions of aftertimes. We have no prayers to saints or angels, but all our prayers are directed, as they ought to be, "to God alone, through Jesus Christ the only Mediator between God and man." We have no fabulous legends imposed on us; but we have the Holy Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, in an excellent order and method daily read unto us. Our prayers are in a tongue and language that we all understand. We have an entire Sacrament, the Cup of blessing in the Holy Eucharist, which was sacrilegiously taken from us by the Church of Rome, being happily restored to us. The ridiculous pageantry and fopperies of that Church are laid aside, and we have the Holy Sacrament purely, reverently, and decently administered.

Let us bless and praise God for these His great mercies, and make a good use of them. Let us constantly resort to the Prayers of our Church, and neglect no opportunity of receiving the Holy Sacrament. And in our daily prayers let us be serious, reverent, and devout; shaking off that coldness and indifferency which is sadly observable in too too many, and

which is enough to render the best of Liturgies ineffectual and contemptible.

In a word, let our practice answer to our prayers ; let us live like Christians, and as becomes the members of so excellent a Church. And if we do so, our prayers will be acceptable to God, and bring down a blessing, not only upon ourselves, but upon our Church and State too ; and we shall see peace in Sion, and prosperity in our Israel.

Which God of His infinite mercy grant, through our Lord Jesus Christ : to Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be given all honour and glory, adoration and worship, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON XIV.

THAT THE DOCTRINE OF THE RECOMPENSE OF REWARD TO BE BESTOWED ON THE RIGHTEOUS AFTER THIS LIFE, WAS UNDERSTOOD AND BELIEVED BY THE PEOPLE OF GOD BEFORE THE LAW WAS GIVEN; AND THAT IT IS LAWFUL TO SERVE GOD WITH RESPECT TO, OR IN HOPE OF, THE FUTURE HEAVENLY RECOMPENSE.

HEBREWS xi. 26.

For he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

THIS chapter throughout is an encomium or commendation of faith; the efficacy and virtue whereof the divine author declares and sets forth by very many examples of those saints and holy men, that were the ancestors of the Jews to whom he wrote, and who by faith did and suffered many great and wonderful things. Wherein the design of the author is to animate and encourage the Christian Jews to a constant perseverance in the profession and obedience of Christ's Gospel, notwithstanding the persecutions which they suffered from their unbelieving brethren for the sake thereof. Which indeed were so severe, that some of those Christian Jews, to avoid them, had already shrunk from and deserted the Church assemblies, as we learn from the 25th verse of the preceding chapter, and were in danger of a total apostasy from Christianity: the dreadful consequence whereof the author excellently sets forth in the following verses of the same chapter to the end. But to fortify them against those persecutions, the most effectual means being a stedfast faith and belief of the future reward, he therefore in this chapter exemplifies such a faith in very many most illustrious instances thereof, recorded in the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

The paragraph, of which my text is part, concerns Moses the great prophet and legislator of the Jews, whom above all others they admired; and therefore the divine writer dwells longer upon his example.

He begins with the nativity of Moses, and therein takes occasion to set forth the faith of the religious parents of so excellent a son^a; “By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw him a proper” (or goodly) “child, and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment.” Which words some very learned interpreters think have reference to an ancient tradition among the Jews, delivered us by Josephus^b, “That God appeared to Amram the father of Moses by dream, and promised him a son, who should in due time deliver the Hebrews from the Egyptian bondage.” Which oracle both Amram and his wife, to whom he communicated it, firmly believing, and observing the goodness and admirable features of Moses, when he was born, promising something extraordinary in him, they concluded that this was the happy child which the oracle had promised them; and therefore they did the best they could to preserve him, notwithstanding the cruel edict of Pharaoh, which they feared not so much, as they confided in the Divine prediction, and expected some miraculous providence in the case. Indeed that there was some oracle of God delivered concerning Moses, that he should be the redeemer of the Israelites, long before God appeared to him in the bush, (though the sacred history of the Old Testament is silent therein,) is evident enough from the words of St. Stephen concerning him^c. Where the protomartyr having mentioned Moses’s going forth from Pharaoh’s court to visit his brethren the Hebrews, and appearing in the behalf of one of them so far as to slay the Egyptian that injured and oppressed him^d; he presently adds^e, “for he supposed his brethren would have understood, how that God by his hands would deliver them.”

If he supposed his brethren would have understood this, it is beyond all question he understood it himself. And how could he understand it, but by some Divine prediction concerning him to that purpose, antecedent to God’s illustrious appearing to him in the bush? Nor is it any contradiction to this, what we read in the third and fourth chapters of Exodus, that

^a Ver. 23.

^b Joseph. Antiq. ii. 5.

^c Acts vii.

^d Ver. 23, 24.

^e Ver. 25.

when God appeared to Moses in the bush, and commanded him to go to Pharaoh and demand from him the freedom of the Israelites, he a first and second time refused the embassy, or at least was unwilling to undertake it. For this he did, because he looked upon it as impossible by way of treaty to obtain the liberty of God's people from the proud, stubborn, cruel, and inexorable tyrant; at least impossible for him in the ill circumstances he was now in; his life being sought by Pharaoh and the Egyptians for the life of the Egyptian whom he had slain: upon which account he concluded, that he should be so far from procuring the release of the Israelites from their bondage by his going into Egypt, that, as soon as he set foot there, he should infallibly meet with his own death. And indeed that this was at the very bottom of Moses's refusal is evident from hence, that God at least for his encouragement thus bespeaks him: "Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life^f." That herein Moses was to be blamed, as at present under a great conflict of unbelief and distrust of God, cannot be doubted; seeing the holy text expressly tells us, that "the anger of the Lord was kindled against him for it^g."

But the divine author of this Epistle thought it both charitable and reasonable to draw a veil of silence over this infirmity of the otherwise excellent person, which he himself had so candidly confessed to the world in his own writings; and to take no notice of the short eclipse of his faith, which both before and after (excepting only in one instance more) shone with so bright a glory.

Wherefore the admirable faith of Moses himself, in his first adventure, he thus in the next place elegantly describes^h; "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." That is, when he was forty years old, (as we learn from St. Stephen in the place already cited,) he left Pharaoh's court, and went abroad to

^f Exod. iv. 19.

^g Exod. iv. 14.

^h Ver. 24—26.

visit his oppressed brethren, and appeared courageously in vindication of them; thereby declaring, that he had a greater ambition to join himself to the afflicted people of God, than to retain the honour of being the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter; and that he despised the momentary sinful pleasures of that great monarch's palace, and all the riches and treasures that he might have been heir to, if he had continued there; and esteemed it a far greater happiness to be numbered with the poor, afflicted, and despised Israelites, the people of Christ, whom Christ (as the *Λόγος*, "the Word of God," then, and from eternity existing) took special care of.

For the reproach of the Israelites seems to me to be called "the reproach of Christ," not only for the similitude between it, and that which Christ afterward suffered, or because it was a type thereof, as all the Socinians, and divers otherwise orthodox Divines, herein agreeing with them, have imagined; but also and chiefly because that people was the people of Christ, and so their reproach His. The people of Christ, I say they were, whom Christ took into His singular favour and tuition; appearing to their ancestors the holy Patriarchs; shewing Himself to Moses in the bush, and proclaiming Himself "the God of his fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," and declaring that "He had surely seen the affliction of His peopleⁱ." And afterwards leading the Israelites through the wilderness, as St. Paul himself not obscurely teaches us^k, and as all the Catholic Doctors and Fathers of the primitive Christian Church have with one consent delivered to us. But this by the way; I proceed.

Now what was the motive that induced Moses to make this strange and wonderful choice? My text tells us, "for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." For the explaining of which words, the question will be, What was the *μισθαποδοσία*, "the recompense of the reward," which Moses had "respect unto?" Grotius understands it to be *terram illam excellentem*, "that excellent land, the land of Canaan, which was promised to Abraham and his seed." But nothing can be more absurd than this interpretation.

For if this had been the reward that Moses had respect unto,

ⁱ Exod. iii. 6, 7.

^k 1 Cor. x. 9.

he certainly missed of his aim. For he never set a foot in the land of Canaan, having only seen it afar off from Mount Pisgah, and then presently dying, as we read Deut. xxxiv. 4, 5. Nor did he ever in his life attain any other reward, which he might look on as a reasonable encouragement of those heroic enterprises which he undertook; unless we can imagine the perpetual vexation which he sustained, even for forty years together, in governing a cross, perverse, stiffnecked, and stubborn people in the wilderness, to be itself a desirable reward, and worthy of his ambition. It was therefore a reward in another world that Moses looked and had respect unto. Which is also farther evident from hence, that the divine author sets the reward which Moses aimed at, as it were in balance against that which he terms “the having a temporary enjoyment of sin¹,” or, as other translators render it, “to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”

In the judgment therefore of this sacred writer, Moses rejected and despised the sinful pleasures of Pharaoh’s court upon this consideration, that they were short and transitory; that he could enjoy them but for a while; that he must die, after some years expired, and bid an eternal farewell to them. On the other side, he chose to take his lot and portion with the afflicted people of God, as having “respect to the recompense of the reward,” attending the virtuous in the other life, which is not temporary, but eternal. That this is the meaning of the author, every man must presently see, that is not strangely blinded with prejudice.

And that he was not mistaken in thinking that Moses had a knowledge and belief of the future reward, I shall prove by a demonstrative argument taken out of the writings of Moses himself. In the fifth chapter of Genesis^m, we read, that “Enoch walked with God, and was not; for God took him.” Which words, all men that have read them, both Jews and Christians, have always understood of the translation of Enoch (either in his soul only, or in his soul and body together) to heavenly bliss, after a virtuous life spent in this world amongst a wicked and vicious generation of men. He therefore that

¹ Πρόσκαιρον ἔχειν ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν.

^m Ver. 24.

wrote this history, could not be ignorant of a reward in the other life, for them that walk with God in this life.

Now we know that Moses was the penman of this historical book. Moses therefore certainly had an apprehension of that reward which awaits good and pious men in the other world. To this reward he had respect in all the great things which he did or suffered for the people of God: *i. e.* he believed and hoped for it, and was thereby animated and encouraged in the way of virtue which he had made choice of.

The text being thus explained, very naturally yields us these two observations.

1. That the doctrine of the recompense of reward, to be bestowed on the righteous after this life, was understood and believed by the people of God, before the Law was given.
2. That it is lawful to serve God with respect to, or in hope of, the future heavenly reward.

I begin with the first proposition, *viz.* that the doctrine of the recompense of reward to be bestowed on the righteous after this life, was understood and believed by the people of God before the Law was given.

Such a knowledge and belief the divine author assures us Moses had, when he first renounced the glories, treasures, and pleasures of Pharaoh's court, and chose his portion among the afflicted, oppressed people of God; and that was long before the Law was revealed to him. And whence learned he this doctrine? We have no ground to say that he received it by immediate divine revelation, seeing we read not of any appearance of God to him, before that in the bush; and an easy and clear account may be given of the original of this his faith, without supposing any such revelation.

He had it therefore by tradition from his religious parents, being nursed by his own mother, and trained up in his father's house till he arrived to some years, and not till then delivered to Pharaoh's daughter, as we read *Exod. ii. 10.* By them he was taught the true religion, the religion of the holy Patriarchs, and this article as a chief branch of it; which religion he still faithfully retained, after he was taken into the palace of that idolatrous prince. Nor is it to be doubted, but that the same religion in the substance of it, was preserved in all other

pious families of the Hebrews, even under the Egyptian bondage; and that the hope and consolation which their religion ministered to them, was their chief support under that miserable servitude.

The article of a future life, as I have already suggested, was part of the creed of the holy Patriarchs long before the time of Moses. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, was, by a miraculous translation to the heavenly bliss, made an example, and given as an illustrious proof and demonstration to the succeeding generations, of the glorious reward reserved in the other world for them that walk with God in this life. Nor could they that lived nearer the times of Enoch be ignorant of that mighty work of God, which Moses so many ages after had knowledge of, and delivered down to the generations after him in his writings. Nay, Enoch himself, in his time, was an open asserter and preacher of this doctrine of a life to come; St. Jude assuring us, that he spake and prophesied of God's "coming with thousands of His saints," or holy angels, "to judge the worldⁿ." So that Enoch's after-translation was a plain seal and confirmation of that faith, which he had formerly professed and taught, and was undoubtedly designed by God as such. And the author of this Epistle to the Hebrews, in this very chapter out of which my text is taken, professedly and expressly teaches, that the Patriarchs and holy men, who lived before Moses, had the same apprehension of the future reward that Moses had.

The truth is this. God, after the fall of our first parents, and His sentence pronounced on them for their sin, again revealed Himself to them; teaching them both what they should do to recover His lost favour, and what they were to expect from Him upon so doing; their duty, and their reward: though in the history of the Old Testament there is no more mention of this revelation, than of the revelation of God to Enoch, and the prophecies he uttered from that revelation. But unless we grant this, we must necessarily run into the error of those of old, who denied the salvation of our first parents.

From this first institution to fallen man proceeded the law of

ⁿ Jude 14, 15.

expiatory sacrifices, (as types and shadows of the great Sacrifice in due time to be offered by Christ, the second Adam, for the sin of the first,) practised by the immediate sons of Adam, and from thence derived into the practice of all mankind. For the conceit of those who think the light of nature directed the first men to this rite, must needs appear strange to him that more attentively considers the matter. And from the same original (I question not) it is, that the notion of a life to come hath been always found among the heathen nations, even some of the most barbarous nations, of whom neither we nor our forefathers, for many ages past, had any knowledge, till the latter discoveries of a new world. And accordingly St. Paul, in the first chapter of his Epistle to Titus^o, expressly tells us, that "God, who cannot lie, promised eternal life," *πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων*, *i. e.* (not "before the foundation of the world," as our translators render the words; for then there were no men to whom such promise might be made; but) "before ancient times," as the words elsewhere in Scripture signify^p, *i. e.* in the most early age of the world, or in the world's infancy.

Now if the primitive revelation of the future life be not yet to this day utterly lost and forgotten among the heathen, yea barbarous nations; what an unreasonable thing is it to imagine, that the tradition of it should so soon perish among God's own people, as that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the other holy Patriarchs, should have no knowledge of it?

And as to those good men that lived under the law of Moses, (though that in the letter of it had none but carnal and temporal promises,) it is certain they still retained the same faith of a life to come, as also their posterity do to this day. Nor did the Law that came after, evacuate or thrust out the Gospel that was delivered from the beginning.

This I have formerly shewn you by undeniable instances, upon another occasion^q, and have also given you the full use and improvement of this doctrine, and shall therefore now insist no farther on it, but proceed to the other observation from the text, which is this.

^o Verse 2.

^p Rom. xvi. 25. [But the expression in Tit. i. 2, is *πρὸ χρόνων αἰω-*

νων: in Rom. xvi. 25, it is *λρόνοις αἰώνιοις*.]

[^q Sermon. VIII.]

Observ. 2. It is lawful to serve God with respect to, or in hope of, the future heavenly reward.

For so did Moses, as the text expressly tells us; and he is so far from being blamed, that he is commended for his so doing, and propounded as a pattern for others to do likewise.

This I note, to meet with certain airy fanciful Divines of this latter age, who, pretending to a more spiritual, refined, and sublime theology, above all the Doctors of the Church that have been before them, have among other their subtle doctrines delivered this for a certain truth, That the obedience which is excited by the hope of reward, is not a true, *i. e.* filial, but a servile mercenary obedience, and so not to be allowed in Christians under the Gospel.

This divinity may be read almost in every page of the writings of Crisp, Saltmarsh, Townsend, Eaton, and the author of the “*Marrow of Modern Divinity*,” and many others of the same herd. Books they are, which, though they highly deserve the flames, are notwithstanding still to be found in many families of schismatics; especially those of the Independent and Anabaptistical sect. These highly admire them, as the most spiritual writings; whilst the very many excellent labours of the orthodox, learned, and pious Divines of our Church, (the wonder of foreigners,) are neglected and despised by them.

Now this doctrine of theirs we utterly reject as a Sadducæan fiction, and an error intolerable, and repugnant to the whole tenor of sacred Scripture. A Sadducæan error I call it, because it was the first occasion of the heresy of the Sadducees. For that heresy arose from a saying of Antigonus, the master of Sadoc, who was the author of it, and lived not long after the time of Ezra. The saying, as the learned Drusius relates it out of good authors, was this; “Be not ye like those servants, who serve their master for reward; but be ye like those servants, who serve indeed their master, but yet not for reward^r.” This foolish saying of the sublime Doctor, his scholars improved into an execrable heresy; denying that there is any reward to be expected in the life to come of our virtuous actions in this life.

^r Nolite similes esse servis iis, qui totē similes servis iis, qui serviunt qui-
serviunt Domino pro mercede; sed es- dem Domino, non tamen pro mercede.

Thus enthusiasm commonly leads the way to atheism or infidelity; and a fanatic religion at last ends in no religion. It is no wonder, that a doctrine designed to banish the future reward out of men's thoughts and consideration, should soon proceed so far as to discard it from their belief, and not to allow it a room in their creed. For it is a very vain thing to make that the object of our faith, which must not be suffered to be the object of our hope and desire. I have said that this error is intolerable, and repugnant to the whole tenor of sacred Scripture; and what I have said will appear most true, from the arguments I shall produce against it; to which arguments I now proceed.

I. In the Holy Scriptures, the future reward is every where promised and propounded, as a motive to excite and stir us up to good works. So our Saviour encourages His disciples to a cheerful suffering for "righteousness sake," by this argument, that their "reward" should be "great in heaven^s." And by the same motive He exhorts them to secret and private devotions, viz. that "God who seeth in secret shall reward" them "openly^t." And almost innumerable are the texts of Scripture which speak to the same purpose. Now what an unreasonable conceit is it to think, that where a reward is promised as an encouragement to work, it should be a fault and sin to work with an eye or respect to the reward! Nay, hence it appears, that this error in the consequence of it, is a horrid blasphemy. For if the hope of the future reward be a sinful motive of obedience, it necessarily follows, that the Holy Ghost, by propounding this motive every where to us, and pressing it on us, lays a snare before us, and tempts and urges us to sin; at which impious consequence every good Christian must needs tremble.

II. The Holy Scriptures do not only promise the heavenly reward as an encouragement of our obedience, but also they expressly command and require us, in the way of obedience, to seek after it; *i. e.* to intend and aim at it, and to make the attaining of it, our great design and business. So our blessed Lord, "Seek ye first" (*πρῶτον*, principally and chiefly) "the kingdom of God and His righteousness;" that is, God's reward, and God's work; the heavenly glory which He

^s Matt. v. 12.

^t Matt. vi. 4.

^u Matt. vi. 33.

hath promised, and the holiness and righteousness which He requires, as the condition of obtaining it, the one in order to the other. So St. Paul^u; "Seek" (τὰ ἄνω) "the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth;" that is, aspire to that heavenly glory, of which Christ your Lord and Head is already possessed, and that in the most eminent degree; having all power in heaven given Him, and so the power of bestowing the same heavenly glory on all such as shall tread in His steps and obey His precepts: direct your thoughts, desires, and affections towards that solid, stable, lasting, yea, everlasting felicity; and suffer them not to settle or rest in the transitory, vanishing, and perishing enjoyments of this earth. And to the same sense and purpose the Holy Ghost speaks in very many other places of Scripture, which I have not time now to recite. It is therefore so far from being sinful, in the course of our Christian obedience, to cast an eye towards the heavenly reward for our encouragement, that we sin if we do not so; yea, if we do not fix our eye on it, and employ our chief studies, cares, and desires about the obtaining of it. For, unless we do thus, we transgress the plain commandment of God, Who alone hath power to determine what we ought to do, and Who best knows what is fittest for us to do.

III. In this eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, out of which my text is taken, we read, that not only Moses, but all the most eminent saints of old, served God with respect to the future recompense of reward. For the divine author ascribes all the great things, which they did and suffered for God, to their faith, which he makes the ground and foundation of their whole obedience, both active and passive, and that which animated and encouraged them thereunto.

Now what was this faith? The author plainly tells us^x, "Without faith it is impossible to please Him," (*i. e.* God,) "for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." The faith, then, whereby all those excellent persons, of whose acts and sufferings we have a compendium or abridgment in this chapter,

^u Col. iii. 1, 2.^x Ver. 6.

came unto God, *i. e.* devoted themselves to His worship and service, and in so doing pleased Him, was a faith respecting God as the *μισθαποδότης*, “the Rewarder of all His faithful servants.”

Wherefore they who affirm, that to serve God in hope of the reward which He hath promised, is a slavish and sinful obedience, do consequentially cast a very foul slur upon all those eminent patterns and examples of virtue which the Holy Ghost here sets forth and propounds to our imitation. They do indeed unsaint them all, and strip them of their sonship, and degrade them into a herd of vile mercenary slaves.

And such is the modesty of the men with whom we have to do, that they startle not at so horrid a consequence, but are ready boldly to affirm, that all those saints were Old Testament saints, living under a servile dispensation, and that therefore their example in this case is no good or warrantable pattern for our imitation under the Gospel. But this pretence (as I have already noted) is a plain contradiction to the very scope and design of the Holy Ghost in this chapter, which is manifestly to propound those Old Testament saints, as they call them, as egregious examples for us Christians to follow. Besides, many of the persons mentioned in the same chapter were persons of so transcendent and heroic a virtue, that the best of us may blush to think at what an humble distance we follow after them. But to put the matter out of all doubt,

IV. We find that the best and most excellent of the New Testament saints obeyed God, and suffered for Him upon the same motive and inducement of the heavenly reward. The great Apostle of Christ, St. Paul, speaking of himself, says, “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Where that by the *βραβεῖον*, “the prize of the high calling of God in Christ,” is meant the future eternal glory, to which God calls us by the Gospel of Christ, as to the reward of our obedience thereunto, is agreed on by all interpreters. The expression is metaphorical, and borrowed from the ancient custom in races, wherein the *βραβευτής*, “he that held and bestowed the prize,” sat in some high place, and from thence by an herald or crier called to each of the racers, acquainted him with the prize, and offered it to

him that should best acquit himself in the race. Thus God from the highest heaven calls to us by Christ, and offers us the inestimable prize of eternal glory, if we run well that race of virtue and obedience, which in the Gospel of Christ is marked out and prescribed unto us. Now St. Paul here plainly signifies, that he himself, throughout his whole Christian race, had a continual eye to this “prize of the high calling of God in Christ,” and that the obtaining thereof was his aim and end, his great design and business. It is evident, therefore, that St. Paul, as well as Moses, served God with respect to the recompense of reward.

The same thing in many other places he affirms, not only of himself, but of the rest of the Apostles, and of those other excellent examples of virtue, both active and passive, in that glorious age. You may especially peruse, at your leisure, the following texts, 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25, and chap. xv. throughout; and 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18; and Col. i. 4, 5.

V. And lastly, We may advance yet a step higher, and safely affirm, that even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, as man, in His sinless, perfect, and meritorious obedience, had likewise a respect to the recompense of reward. This is the plain sense of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews^z, where he exhorts us “to look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

I confess there are some interpreters, (and those no mean ones,) who so expound this text, as to make it signify very little to our purpose. For they say, that in those words *ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς*, the preposition *ἀντὶ* signifies not “for,” but “instead of;” and so that the words are to be thus rendered, “Who, instead of the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross,” &c. But what sense is this? Why, say they, the meaning is, that Christ, if it had so pleased Him, might not have died; He might have exempted Himself from all sorrow and trouble, and lived a life of joy and happiness, flowing with all good things, like that of the innocent Adam in Paradise: “But instead of this, He chose and suffered the

^z Chap. xii. 2.

cross," &c. But any unprejudiced person may presently discern this to be a very forced interpretation. It is true, ἀντὶ more frequently signifies *loco*, "instead of," but not always; for it is sometimes used for ἔνεκα, "for," or "for the sake of," and denotes the cause of a thing. So whereas we read^a, ἕνεκεν τούτου, "for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother," &c. the same thing is expressed^b by ἀντὶ τούτου, which is likewise translated "for this cause^c." And that so the preposition must be rendered here, and not according to the other sense, is certain; because that other sense is repugnant to the whole design and scope of the place. For the divine author thought not here of an earthly temporary joy belonging to Christ, but of the heavenly joy and felicity designed for Him; and therefore he presently expounds it to be His "sitting at the right hand of the throne of God." Which is also farther evident from hence, that He speaks of a joy which was προκειμένη "set before Christ," that is, propounded and offered to Him, in the same sense as our race (in its whole extent, and with the prize at the end of it) is said to be προκειμένη "set before us," viz. by God, in the verse immediately preceding. But God never thus propounded any earthly felicity to Christ, but on the contrary set before Him the cross and the crown, the former to be suffered here, the latter to be enjoyed hereafter.

Indeed as are all the expressions in the foregoing verse, so is this apparently agonistical, and alludes to the prize set before, propounded, and offered to them that run in a race, for their encouragement. In a word, the προκειμένη χαρὰ, "the joy that was set before Christ," is manifestly the same thing in kind with the προκειμένη ἐλπὶς, "the hope" (or thing hoped for) "set before us," of which our author speaks in the sixth chapter of this Epistle^d; "That we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." It is not therefore to be doubted, but that the meaning of the author is, that Christ, as man, in His obedience and sufferings, had respect to that transcendent joy,

^a Matt. xix. 5.

^b Eph. v. 31.

^c [The examples of ἀνθ' ὧν, wherefore, on which account, are numerous: e. g.

Luke i. 20; xii. 3; xix. 41; Acts xii. 23;

2 Thess. ii. 10.]

^d Verse 18.

glory, and felicity, which God had propounded to Him, and set before Him, as the reward of His obedience and sufferings, and was encouraged to do and suffer what He did, by the certain hope and expectation of that reward.

Christ therefore Himself, as man, had respect in His obedience to the recompense of reward.

It is the opinion of many learned Divines, that the strength which Christ received in His ante-passion in the garden, from an angel there appearing to Him, mentioned Luke xxii. 43, consisted chiefly in a vigorous and lively sense and consideration of that incomparable felicity, which He should presently after receive as the reward of His passion, impressed on His mind, and perhaps vocally suggested to Him, by the same angel. Nor is it any wonder He should need such comfort against His passion, who was under a real fear of it; as we learn from the relations of the Evangelists, and from the plain and express words of the author of this Epistle to the Hebrews, assuring us, that Christ "in the days of His flesh offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cryings and tears, unto Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared^e." Indeed our dear Saviour and Redeemer was pleased to assume our whole nature, with all its concomitant affections and passions, that were not sinful; and therefore He feared death; and therefore He solaced Himself with the hope of immortality; and therefore so may we do also. As little wonder is it, that our Lord, having all the legions of the holy angels under His command, should receive this consolation from an angel; seeing He received it in the state of His humiliation, wherein He was made a little lower than the angels; and that in the same state, at other times, as in His temptation in the wilderness, He disdained not the assisting ministry of the "holy angels^f."

These arguments, laid together, amount to a demonstration, and abundantly shew the folly and absurdity of their opinion, who assert, that to serve God in hope of reward, even the heavenly reward, is a servile and sinful obedience; and that no obedience is pleasing to God, but what is wholly abstracted from all consideration of such reward. The conceit of these men (as a learned Divine expresseth it) savours of an imaginary,

^e Chap. v. 7.

^f Matt. iv. 11.

metaphysical subtlety, and a certain eestatical affection of piety, rather than of a simple, genuine, and solid knowledge of the Christian religion.

Or (if I may speak the same thing in my own words) these men teach a virtue not heroic, but romantic, impracticable, no where to be found but in the scene of fancy; and they require others to do that, which in truth themselves never did nor can do.

But the main foundation of this their fantastical divinity, relies only on this one argument: We are, say they, required in Scripture, to do all that we do to the glory of God, and out of love to Him; and therefore we ought not to serve Him out of hope of reward, no, not the heavenly reward.

Ans. I utterly deny the consequence, and do affirm, that the directly contrary conclusion may be rather inferred from hence, viz. that therefore we ought in serving God to aim at the heavenly reward. For the Divine Goodness hath so framed things in the economy of our salvation, that our glorifying of God, and our being glorified by Him, our love of God, and our love of ourselves, and desire of our own happiness, are inseparably linked together, so that we cannot truly intend the one without the other.

To desire and seek after the future happiness of heaven, what is it but to desire and seek after that blessed state, wherein alone we shall perfectly glorify God, and love and enjoy Him for ever? So that to say, we must not serve God in hope or desire of the heavenly reward, is in effect to say, we must not serve God out of love to Him; for to love God is to desire union with, and enjoyment of Him; and in a perfect union with and fruition of God that reward consisteth. I confess it is very possible, yea too common, for men to seek after heaven in such a manner, as in so doing to have little or no love or regard to God the Fountain of heavenly bliss. Thus do all those Christians, who, with the Jews and Mahometans, conceive of heaven as a place or state made up of carnal and sensual delights and pleasures, and under that notion only desire it.

These men do *terram in cælo quærere*, "seek earth in heaven;" they are earthly-minded in their very thoughts and desires of heaven, and so in truth seek not heaven, but earth.

These men do not make God their chief good and felicity. But, on the other side, he that is throughly convinced of the perfect vanity of all earthly enjoyments, considering that most of them are brutish felicities, wherein we are partakers with the beasts; and that they all vanish and perish in the using; that the holy angels are far more happy and blessed creatures than we are in this state of mortality; and yet that they despise those worldly felicities that we so much dote on, as being sensible of another kind of happiness infinitely above them: he that believes and considers that God is the best and most blessed Being of all; and that whatsoever is truly good and desirable in any created being, is from Him the Fountain of goodness; and is therefore eminently and in an infinitely greater measure (or rather without measure) in Him; and, consequently, that the enjoyment of God must needs be man's chiefest good and happiness; and that this enjoyment of God is to be attained only in the future heavenly state: he, I say, that upon these or the like considerations, seeks after heaven in the way of righteousness, in his very doing so, truly loves and honours God above all things, and shall undoubtedly be for ever loved and blessed by Him.

At the same time that God gave us our being and nature, He planted in us an inclination to preserve it, and a desire also of our own well-being and happiness; and that so firmly, that these can never be eradicated or rooted out of us, without the very destruction of our being and nature. We do not sin therefore when we seek our own happiness, unless we seek it where we should not; that is, elsewhere than from and in God Himself.

It is true, indeed, that God made all things for His own glory, and that therefore all creatures, endowed with reason, are bound to honour and glorify Him. But this great truth, if rightly understood, is so far from confirming, that it utterly overthrows the objection propounded, and firmly establishes our assertion. The glory which God antecedently and primarily intended to Himself in making the world, was the glory of His goodness. For He being from all eternity *αὐτάρκης*, "self-sufficient," fully and perfectly happy and blessed in Himself, needed not the praises of His creatures, or any thing else from them, as an accession to His happiness. But it pleased Him, when He saw good, as it were, to go forth from Himself, by

making other beings besides Himself, in several ranks and orders, some remoter from, some nearer to Him; and to communicate to each of them such effluxes of His goodness, as His infinite wisdom thought most fitting. The glory of this Divine goodness is passively and materially declared by all creatures universally, that is, it appears in every creature to all creatures that can understand it. But those creatures only that have understanding can glorify God for His goodness to them actively; and to this they are obliged, as soon as they have a being from God, and can know the Author of their being. And when they discharge this obligation, God hath the glory He aimed at in the communication of His goodness to them.

But what, you will say, is all this to the purpose? I answer, Very much. For the result of this discourse is, that God made us to do us good, and that we should glorify and serve Him for the good He doth us: from whence it apparently follows, that our respect to our own good, and our regard to God's glory, are inseparable; and that the consideration of God's goodness, derived to ourselves, cannot be an irregular, sinful motive of our obedience to God; seeing God designed it for the motive of our obedience in our very creation. And if we may, nay, must glorify, love, and serve God for that goodness of His, wherewith He hath prevented us, and of which we are already possessed; then certainly we may as well honour, love, and obey Him for that farther goodness which He hath promised us, and which we hope for and expect from Him; especially for that greatest good which He hath reserved for us in the life to come, on condition we faithfully serve Him in this life, viz. the everlasting enjoyment of Himself in heaven.

Wherefore, to conclude, let us not fear, throughout the whole course of our service and obedience to God on earth, continually to eye and aim at the future glorious reward in heaven; for so to do is not only lawful, but highly necessary for us.

1. This constant fixed intuition of the heavenly reward will invigorate, quicken, and animate us to a mighty diligence in the ways of righteousness and holiness: this will sweeten all our labours in God's service, and make our very work a part of our reward. 2. This will enable us to overcome the world by a holy contempt of it and all its vanities. 3. This will arm us

against all the temptations of the devil and the flesh; for he that hath continually in his thought the transcendent excellency of the heavenly bliss, how can he ever be persuaded to part with his right therein for "a mess of pottage," or to barter it for an empty honour, or for a heap of glittering earth, or for the gratifying of a vile lust, and the enjoyment of a vanishing sinful pleasure? 4. This will make the burden of those afflictions and sorrows, that necessarily attend us in this vale of tears, light and easy. 5. This will be our only support and comfort in the hour of death, when all other earthly comforts fail and forsake us.

In a word, let us with Moses and all the faithful from the beginning of the world, have a constant "respect to the recompense of reward," by a firm and stedfast faith; and by the encouragement thereof follow them in the paths of holiness, patience, and self-denial, which they have trod before us; and so at last, in God's due time, we shall undoubtedly "with them be partakers of His heavenly Kingdom."

To which God of His infinite mercy bring us all, through Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour.

To Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON XV.

THAT MANY MAY HAVE A FORM OR SHOW OF GODLINESS, WHEN
THEY DENY ITS POWER, AND ARE FAR FROM THE TRUTH AND
REALITY OF IT.

2 TIM. iii. 5.

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

IN the beginning of this chapter, we have an illustrious prophecy of St. Paul's delivered to Timothy, concerning what should happen in the Church of Christ after his decease; which is thus ushered in^a; "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come;" ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις *i. e.* not only the very last days, towards the end of the world, but in general, (according to the Hebrew phrase,) "the days to come," or "the future time," whether nearer or afar off. For what in the following verses he doth foretel, he supposeth would begin to happen in the age of Timothy, to whom he delivers the prophecy, and that by way of caution or warning to him, as most evidently appears from the end of this fifth verse, immediately after the words of my text, *τούτους ἀποτρέπου*, "from such do thou" (thou, Timothy) "turn away," and avoid them. But yet the full completion of the prophecy doubtless reacheth farther than Timothy's days, and extends itself even to the end of the world.

So among very many other interpreters Mr. Calvin thinks, who hath this gloss upon the text: "Under the last days he comprehends the whole state of the Christian Church^b." For (as the same author goes on) his design is not to compare his

^a Ver. 1.

universum Ecclesiæ Christianæ sta-

^b Sub extremis diebus comprehendit tum.

own or the age next to him with ours, but in general to represent the condition even of the Kingdom of Christ here on earth.

And this he doth to obviate the vain conceit of some men, and those good men too, who fancied that now the Gospel times were come, the golden age would soon return, and continue for ever. An age all holiness, all happiness; a kind of heaven upon earth! And indeed such a blessed change and turn in the world might reasonably have been expected by him that considered only the nature of the Gospel of Christ, its excellent precepts of holiness, the most powerful motives to it therein delivered, the mighty grace of the Spirit of God accompanying the preaching of it, and the astonishing miracles wherewith it was confirmed.

But the Apostle here shews, that through the vicious nature and corruption of men it should happen quite otherwise, and that even this admirable Gospel of Christ should in many fail of its designed and desired effect, that even "these last days" of the Gospel should be "perilous times:" perilous, because sinful; sinful, with the highest aggravation, because hypocrisy should abound in them; and very many men should still be very wicked, and yet seem very holy. Some of the chief of their sins and wickedness he particularly describes^c; "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." And then he adds a character of their hypocrisy, as a veil drawn over all their wickedness in the words of my text; "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

For the explaining of the text, it will be necessary to enquire into these three things. 1. What is meant by "a form of godliness." 2. What by the "power of godliness." 3. What by "denying the power of godliness."

I. What is meant by "a form of godliness;" the *μόρφωσις τῆς εὐσεβείας* though I am not ignorant that the word *μόρφωσις* hath sometimes another signification, yet here it

^c Ver. 2—4.

manifestly signifies “a form;” *i. e.* a bare show or appearance of godliness, without the truth and reality of it. A false and counterfeit, not a true and real godliness, *i. e.* an hypocritical religion. As a wooden or stony statue of a man hath the form, shape, figure, likeness, or appearance of a man, but is far from being really so, as having no true flesh and blood, much less a living and reasonable soul; so the hypocrite hath the outward show, likeness, and appearance of a Christian, but is far from being truly such, as being destitute of the substance, life, and soul of Christianity.

This bare “form of godliness” commonly shews itself in these following particulars.

1. In an outward profession of godliness; when men declare themselves to be for godliness, and that in the strictness of it, and yet are enemies to the life and practice of it; when they are great and high professors of religion, (as the modern phrase is,) but very slender and careless performers of it.

2. In an affectation of godly discourse, to gain the repute and esteem of godliness, and that many times when it is altogether unseasonable, and there is no just occasion or opportunity for it. Many there be who have the tongue of the godly, but the hearts and hands of the wicked. By their discourses you would think them to be very saints, but by a stricter examination of their actions, whereby their hearts also are made manifest, they will be found to be far otherwise.

3. In affecting certain modes and fashionable gestures of godliness in ordinary conversation, such as a grave and demure countenance, eyes lifted up, and the like, when men’s hearts are vain, and far from being truly religious or serious.

4. In a reliance on certain outward duties of religion, performed without the inward and sincere affection of the soul. When men rest in hearing or repeating of sermons, or in a formal course of prayer at certain times and seasons, while their lusts are unmortified, and their hearts estranged from the life of God; when they satisfy themselves with instrumental, and neglect essential religion. Hearing of sermons and prayers are indeed necessary duties of religion, but necessary only as instruments and means appointed by God, to bring us, through His grace, to that life and power of religion, which consists in

the mortification of our lusts, and the renovation of our hearts, and the reformation of our lives. And therefore to acquiesce in those outward duties of religion, without an inward, lively sense of it, expressed in agreeable actions, is to have only "a form of godliness." In these and the like shows and appearances, "a form of godliness" consists.

II. We are to enquire, what is meant in the text by "the power of godliness."

Briefly, "the power of godliness" is opposed to "a form of godliness." And therefore, as "a form of godliness" is only an empty show and appearance of it, so "the power of godliness" is unfeigned, real, and true godliness. Which consists in the sincere love of God above all things, and the love of our neighbour as ourselves, expressed in our lives by constant actions of piety towards God, and of justice and charity towards our neighbour. And so I pass to the third and last enquiry, viz.

III. What is meant by "denying the power of godliness."

I answer again, in short, to deny "the power of godliness," is for a man by indecent and vicious actions to contradict his outward show and profession of godliness. According to that description of the wicked Jews given by St. Paul^d; "They profess that they know God; but by works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate." And this briefly may suffice for the explanation of the text.

The proposition or doctrine resulting from it thus explained is this.

A man may have a form or show of godliness, when yet he is very far from the power, *i. e.* the truth and reality of it.

A notable instance of this we have in the Pharisees, who had indeed a very specious form of godliness, but most certainly denied the power of it. They appeared to the ignorant people to be the best of men, when indeed they were the worst. They made long prayers, which were directed more to the people than to God Himself, more to gain their applause than God's gracious acceptance; and accordingly all the while they cunningly and underhand devoured "widows' houses^e." The trumpet sounded out their alms in the market-place, but this, in

^d Tit. i. 16.

^e Matt. xxiii. 14.

the sight of God and wise men, proclaimed their vanity, rather than their charity^f. They prayed "in the synagogues" and the corners of "the streets," and thereby got the reputation of very pious and devout men; but, all the while, they seldom or never prayed in secret, because indeed they regarded not so much God's acceptance, as the approbation and applause of the people^g. And indeed they had the poor and low reward which they aimed at. They were cried up, admired, and almost adored by the common people for the most holy men, the most godly set and party among the Jews; but, all the while, these men were the children of wrath, and the sons of perdition, as far from the power of godliness, as they were famous for the form of it; as much abhorred by God, as they were admired by men.

But what need I look farther than the context for an instance of this truth? The very same men, whom St. Paul describes in the text as having "a form of godliness," are charged by him in the foregoing verses, with a long and lamentable catalogue of the greatest sins and vices: "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God:" and then it follows in the text, "having a form of godliness."

Upon which words of the Apostle, Mr. Calvin hath three remarks or observations not unworthy of our notice.

1. He observes, that the persons here noted for these heinous vices are not heathens, or professed enemies to Christianity, but Christians, and such as would be accounted members of the Church of Christ. It is the lot of the Church of Christ in every age, to carry such monsters in her bosom, which yet she cannot but abhor. And therefore if in our times we find many such persons mixed in our Communion, whose vices we abominate, though we may sigh and groan under the burden, yet we must patiently bear it, as knowing that this is the fate and portion of the Christian Church.

2. He observes, that it is a wondrous thing that such wicked

^f Matt. vi. 2.

^g Matt. vi. 6, 7.

men as are here described by the Apostle, should have the confidence to pretend to godliness. And yet we have the testimony of the great Apostle to assure us of the truth of this so strange a thing. Incredible is the impudence of hypocrites, in palliating and excusing their grossest vices under the outward profession of religion.

3. He observes, that the vices here noted, in the persons described by the Apostle, are for the most part sculking and latent vices, such as do not easily fall under vulgar observation, and yet generally accompany a feigned sanctity. For what hypocrite is there that is not proud? that is not a lover of himself? that is not a despiser of others? that is not fierce and cruel? that is not fraudulent and deceitful? And so in the rest.

The time will not permit me largely to discourse of each of these vices; but yet I shall briefly run over some of the chief of them, not only for the farther confirmation of the proposition, but also to give you a lively portraiture or representation of the hypocrite, who hath "a form of godliness, but denies the power of it."

1. Then, these formalists are said to be *φίλαντοι*, "lovers of their own selves." This vice of theirs the Apostle puts in the front of this black catalogue, and mentions it in the first place, because it is the fountain and original of all the other vices that follow. Indeed it is not simply and absolutely sinful for a man to love himself, nay, self-love is the first and most immediate dictate of the law of nature; for to love, is to wish well and do good to the person loved: and this every man owes in the first place to himself, and then to his neighbour. Charity begins at home, though it doth not end there. But they are here said to be "lovers of themselves," whom St. Paul elsewhere notes, as men that "seek their own things," *i. e.* who study only or chiefly their own conveniences and advantages in this world, having little or no regard to the glory of God, or the benefit of their neighbours.

Against this vice the Apostle cautions us^h; "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." So againⁱ, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." And in the twenty-first verse of the

^h 1 Cor. x. 24.

ⁱ Phil. ii. 1.

same chapter, he notes this as an epidemical vice; “for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.” And the same Apostle elsewhere esteems it as a vice most repugnant to the theological virtue of charity; “Charity seeketh not her own^k.”

Indeed there is another notion of this *φιλαυτία*, or “self-love,” among the moralists, with whom it commonly signifies that vice whereby a man is too fond of himself, and arrogates to himself more worth than indeed he hath, overvalues himself. But this vice is noted afterwards by the Apostle in other words, as you will presently see. The former notion therefore is most apposite to this place of the Apostle.

And from hence we may conclude, that a selfish man, that minds only his own interest in this world, whatever “form of godliness” he may otherwise have put on, can never be a true Christian, is very far from “the power of godliness.” For he is plainly void of charity, “without which” (as our Church expresseth it in one of her Collects) “all our doings are nothing worth, charity being the most excellent gift, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is accounted dead before God.”

2. The formalists, noted by the Apostle, are said to be *φιλάργυροι*, “lovers of money,” covetous persons: a vice also most opposite to “the power of godliness,” and yet a vice very incident to many who make the highest profession of it. The heinousness of the sin appears in this, that it is reckoned with the foulest vices; “But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints^l.” And the covetous man is by the Apostle branded as an idolater: “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God^m.”

3. These formalists are said to be *ἀλαζόνες καὶ ὑπερήφανοι*, “boasters and proud,” *i. e.* such as through the pride of their hearts boast and vaunt themselves in their words and actions: another most detestable vice, and most contrary to “the power of godliness:” “For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to

^k 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

^m Ver. 5.

^l Eph. v. 3.

the humbleⁿ." The proud man, therefore, is an enemy to God, and a graceless person.

4. They are said to be *βλάσφημοι*, "blasphemers." Strange! how can any man that hath any form or show of godliness, that pretends to any thing of religion, be guilty of blasphemy? Yes; even such a man may entertain such notions of God, and maintain such doctrines in religion, as by consequence at least are blasphemy. Thus the Gnostics, on whom the Apostle seems here to reflect, held several doctrines that in their consequence were highly blasphemous. Among others of this nature they affirmed, that certain men are necessarily wicked, and by an irrelative absolute decree of God predestinated and determined to sin, and so to damnation, which is to make God the author of sin, and also the punisher of that sin which He Himself is the author of; both which are certainly very gross blasphemies. That they held this doctrine, we learn from Irenæus and other ancient writers. And against this their blasphemy St. James discourseth^o; "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." I delight not in invidious and odious parallels; but I wish there were not some even in our days, and those such as seem to appropriate to themselves the character of the godly and orthodox party, who after the same manner assert the same blasphemy. But thus even the sin of blasphemy may be sheltered under "a form of godliness."

But there are some expositors who understand the word *βλάσφημοι* here in a milder sense, and with reference to men, as it denotes such as by contumelious speeches maliciously injure the fame and reputation of others, especially their superiors, and those that are in authority over them; which is indeed a grievous sin, and inconsistent with "the power of godliness." And it is a sort of blasphemy, as being against God's representatives, and accordingly very severely prohibited^p; "The

ⁿ 1 Pet. v. 5.

^p Exod. xxii. 28.

^o Chap. i. 13—15.

shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people." And this vice also is censured in the Gnostics by St. Jude in his Epistle^a, where they are said "to despise dominion, and to speak evil of dignities." And even in our days, how many great pretenders to religion are there, who are egregiously guilty of this kind of blasphemy.

5. These formalists are noted by the Apostle as "disobedient to parents." A very grievous sin likewise, and most opposite to "the power of godliness." For let men pretend what they will, he cannot truly honour God the Father in heaven, who doth not duly honour his father, his parents on earth.

But interpreters here well observe, that we are to collect *ex specie genus*, from one special sort of disobedience mentioned, viz. disobedience to parents, all disobedience to superiors in general. And indeed all disobedience to superiors, whether natural, civil, or ecclesiastical, whether to parents, magistrates, or Ministers of the Church, though it may consist with "a form of godliness," yet it is utterly inconsistent with the power of it.

6. These formalists are said to be ἀχάριστοι, "unthankful." Unthankful to God for His manifold mercies; unthankful to men that are their benefactors. A vile sin again, even in the judgment of the heathen, who could tell us, *Ingratum si dixeris*, &c. When you have said a man is ungrateful, you have said all; you cannot say any thing worse of him.

7. They are said to be ἄστοργοι, "without natural affection." So far were these formalists from Christian charity, which extends to all men, that they were destitute of natural affection, of that love which even nature teacheth men to shew to their own flesh and blood. They were void, not only of true grace, but of good-nature.

8. They are said to be ἄσπονδοι, "truee-breakers:" men that make little or no conscience of their most solemn promises, engagements, and agreements, which they make with others, but can break through them all to serve their own interest.

9. They are said to be διάβολοι, "false accusers," which is the title of devils. They make no conscience of raising or spreading abroad lies, false and scandalous reports upon imo-

^a Ver. 8.

cent persons, to their great prejudice and disadvantage. Alas ! how many are there in our days, who though they are great pretenders to “the power of godliness,” yet are notoriously guilty of this very grievous sin !

10. And lastly, (to pass by the other vices next mentioned by the Apostle, as being some way or other reducible to the former,) these formalists are said to be *φιλήδονοι μᾶλλον ἢ φιλόθεοι*, “lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;” *i. e.* their hearts are set upon their lusts more than upon God or goodness. This indeed is at the bottom of all their other sins before mentioned. For where the sincere love of God above all things is found, it will exclude all the forementioned sins and vices. But where that love is wanting, *qua data porta ruunt*, there a wide gate is opened for all those evils to rush and break in upon the soul. And therefore where this love of God is wanting, “the power of godliness” cannot possibly be.

These are the black characters of the men described by the Apostle, and of whom he saith in my text, that “they have a form of godliness, whilst they deny the power thereof.” From whence you may see, what a legion of devils may lurk under the pretended saint, what a troop of the most heinous sins may shelter themselves under “a form of godliness.”

And thus I have fully (I hope) confirmed and illustrated the proposition laid down, *viz.* That a man may have a form or show of godliness, when yet he is very far from the power, *i. e.* the truth and reality of it. Now briefly to apply this whole discourse.

1. Let us take heed of being deceived by such as having “a form of godliness,” yet deny the power of it. Let us not be cheated by false appearances. Let us not believe every pretender to godliness, but remember that all is not gold that glitters: that the greatest wickedness may lurk under the most specious “form of godliness.” Indeed they that affect to make the greatest show of godliness are most of all to be suspected. For the truly good man is humble, content with the testimony of his own conscience, and the approbation of God; and therefore is not so sollicitous to set himself out to others to the best advantage, as the hypocrite is.

This caution is the very use of this doctrine, which the Apostle himself directs us to in the words immediately following my text: "from such," such formalists, "turn away;" *i. e.* shun and avoid them. And from the verses next following, it appears the Apostle had a special eye to unlicensed, false, and schismatical teachers, who, by a specious "form of godliness," endeavoured to seduce men from their lawful Pastors, and to draw them from the Communion of the Church, into house-meetings, and private conventicles. Read the sixth and seventh verses, and you would think the Apostle foresaw and described the humour of our age. "Of this sort" (*i. e.* of men, who having "a form of godliness, deny the power of it") "are they who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women, laden with sin, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

I. "They creep into houses." They forsake the public communion, and keep private conventicles in houses, whereinto they creep and insinuate themselves by fair and specious pretences.

2. "Leading captive silly women." By "a form of godliness," and a fair show of more than ordinary holiness, they impose especially upon the female sex, as being the weaker, and generally of lesser judgment, reason, and understanding. In this they imitate the old serpent, the devil, who began his temptation upon the woman first, and then by her seduced the man also.

3. "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth:" *i. e.* they continually hang upon the lips of these schismatical teachers, and are continually hearing and repeating their preachments, so that one would think they must needs learn much; but indeed they never arrive to that solid and substantial knowledge in religion, which, by a constant attendance on their lawful Pastors, and their ministry, they might have arrived to.

O that the men of our age would attend to these words of the Apostle, and be so wise at last as to shun and avoid such seducers!

That is the first inference, and you see it is the very use which the Apostle himself makes of the doctrine.

2. Let us take heed we deceive not ourselves by “a form of godliness,” whilst we “deny the power of it.” Let us often and seriously consider, that we have to do with a God, Who is the “Searcher of hearts,” and “a Trier of the reins,” Who cannot be imposed upon by any cunning hypocritical artifices of men. No mist that our self-love can cast either upon our own or other men’s eyes, can darken His sight, but He sees through it into the bottom of our hearts, and our most secret inclinations. Though we may deceive others and ourselves too with false appearances of things, yet we can never deceive Him. He knows us far better than we do ourselves. And at the great day of trial, He will thoroughly anatomize us, and lay our very inside perfectly open and naked to the view of the whole world, to the sight of men and angels. And how will the man that hath only “a form of godliness, without the power of it,” be then ashamed and confounded!

They are great and weighty words, which the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews delivers in this case^r; “For the word of God” (*i. e.* the personal Word or Son of God^s, as appears from the sequel) “is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.”

Let us not therefore acquiesce in a bare “form of godliness,” let us never be at rest till we have attained to “the power of it.” And to assure ourselves of this, let us carefully shun and avoid the sins and vices noted in the persons described by the Apostle, and let us practise the contrary virtues.

Let us not be lovers of ourselves, *i. e.* self-seekers, without a due regard to the glory of God and good of others; but let us make these our chiefest aim and end; for thereby we shall be the truest lovers of ourselves.

Let us take heed and beware of covetousness. It is the repeated caution of our Saviour. Let us covet earnestly the best things; let us “seek first the kingdom of God^t,” &c.

^r Chap. iv. 12, 13.

p. 154.]

^s [See Waterland’s Works, vol. iii.

^t Matt. vi. 33.

Let us lay aside all pride and vainglory, “and be clothed with humility^u.”

Let us avoid all unworthy notions, thoughts, and speeches of the great and glorious God, and speak reverently of those men that represent Him.

Let us be obedient to all our superiors, whether natural, civil, or ecclesiastical.

Let us be thankful to God for His mercies, and to all men that are our benefactors.

Let us love all men, but especially let us be tender to our natural relations.

Let us to our power be faithful keepers of all promises we make to our neighbours, especially in matters of right and justice.

Let us take heed of all calumny and slandering of others, and speak evil of no man unnecessarily.

Lastly, and above all things, let us pray most earnestly for the love of God, the prevailing love of God, the love of God above all things. That we may see the perfect vanity of all other things, how short our enjoyment of them will be, how little good there is in them, and how infinitely good and excellent a Being God is, and may therefore set our hearts upon Him, and choose Him for our everlasting portion.

These are the virtues, opposite to those vices, which the Apostle notes as repugnant to “the power of godliness.” In the practice of these, “the power of godliness” consists, and without them, no “form of godliness” will avail us at the great day of accounts.

Now to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

^u 1 Pet. v. 5.

SERMON XVI.^a

A PROSPEROUS CONDITION IN THIS WORLD IS A BLESSING OF GOD, WHEREIN WE NOT ONLY MAY, BUT OUGHT TO REJOICE, SINCE IT IS GIVEN US BY GOD AS A PECULIAR TIME OF COMFORT AND REJOICING.

Eccles. vii. 14.

In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

THOUGH it be very hard in divers places of this Book of Ecclesiastes, to find out the connection of one sentence with the other; yet here a probable account may be given of the coherence of my text with the preceding verse. For therein the Wise Man exhorts us to "consider the work of God," *i. e.* His work of providence, as by the whole context we are led to understand the words; to consider that God works still by His providence, and what He works; and He tells us, that upon this consideration, we shall be forced to say, "Who can make that straight, which He hath made crooked?" *i. e.* God's providence is uncontrollable, and those evil afflictive things that happen to men in the world by His will, cannot be avoided; those crooked things that are so to us, that bend and turn from the way and course designed and desired by us, are directed by God, and what He will have thus "crooked, who can make straight?" To the same sense the Wise Man speaks^b; "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold all is vanity and vexation of spirit. That which is crooked, cannot be made straight."

^a [From the manner in which King Charles II. is mentioned, towards the end of this Sermon, it would appear to have been written after the death of that King.]

^b Chap. i. 14, 15.

Upon this consideration, the Preacher in my text exhorts us all to attend to the work of God's providence in the various occurrences and dispensations thereof, whether prosperous or afflictive, and to accommodate and apply ourselves to them accordingly. "In the day of prosperity," &c.

In the handling of which text I shall follow my usual method, first thoroughly to explain it, and then to raise some practical and useful observations from it.

"In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider." In the Hebrew בְּיוֹם טוֹבָה, "in the good day," or "the day of goodness," *i. e.* in the day or time when the good things we desire happen to us. So the phrase is often used in Scripture^b; "He that will love life and see good" (*i. e.* happy and prosperous) "days, let him refrain his tongue from evil."

"Be joyful." In the Hebrew בְּהֵיטָב, literally, "be thou in good." The Septuagint renders it *ξηθι ἐν ἀγαθῷ*, "live in good." The vulgar *Latin* more clearly, *fruere bonis*, "enjoy thou the good things," which God hath given thee, with complacency and delight in them.

"But in the day of adversity." In the Hebrew בְּיוֹם רָעָה, "in the evil day," when afflictive and evil things happen to thee. This is the known sense of the phrase of "evil days" in Scripture. So^c Jacob expressing to Pharaoh the troubles and afflictions of his past life, saith, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." So the Wise Man again in his Book of Ecclesiastes^d; "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Where the days of old age are called "evil days," because they are generally attended with sickness and infirmities, and other evils both of body and mind.

"In the day of adversity consider." In the Hebrew, רְאֵה, "see thou," consider well the circumstances thou art in, and the duty incumbent on thee; think in what condition thou art, and what thou art to do in that state.

But must we not consider also "in the day of prosperity?"

^c See particularly 1 Pet. iii. 10.

^e Chap. xii. 1.

^d Gen. xlvii. 9.

Must we then lay aside our reason and consideration, and drown ourselves in sensuality? God forbid. I shall shew you anon the necessary cautions and considerations we are to make use of in the "day of prosperity."

"But in the day of adversity" we are especially concerned to "consider," and to consider in a more especial manner. This is a season wherein Divine Providence more loudly calls us to consideration, and to a deeper consideration. We have a like text to this in the Epistle of St. James^c, "Is any man among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms." Shall we hence conclude, that we are to pray only in the time of affliction? This were an absurd and wicked inference. For we are to pray always. But the time of affliction is a more special season for prayer, for much and mighty, for frequent and fervent prayer.

Thus we say *εὐχαίτε γερόντων*, that "prayer is the proper province," the business of old men, who are going out of the world. Not as if old men only were obliged to pray; but they being just ready to be called out of this world to God's tribunal, and upon the very confines of an eternal state, either of happiness or misery, are in a more special manner concerned to be very frequent and earnest in the exercise of this duty. "In the day of adversity consider." This is a most proper season for consideration; and if men do not then consider, they never will. But to proceed with the words of the text.

"God also hath set the one over against the other," *i. e.* God hath set our evil days, or days of adversity, against our days of prosperity, each against, and with each other. Our life is not made up wholly either of prosperous or evil days, but is a mixture of both; one while we are in the day of prosperity, and then presently after in that of adversity; by such vicissitudes and changes, as the Divine Wisdom thinks fit, and most conducing to His glory and our good. And so I come to the last words of my text.

"That man should find nothing after him," *i. e.* (as the most learned interpreters generally expound the words according to the ancient Latin translation,) *ut non inveniat homo contra eum justas quærimonias*, "that man might have no just cause of

^c Chap. v. 13.

complaining against him." For, according to the Hebrew idiom, to find something after another, signifies, upon examination, to find some fault in what he hath done. According to this interpretation, the meaning of the words is this: "God hath so disposed and ordered the whole course of man's life on earth, so chequered and intermingled his prosperous and evil days one with the other, that, upon a review of the whole, man himself will find no reason to complain of Him, or to blame either His wisdom, or justice, or goodness, in that disposal."

So that in the whole, the text is (as an excellent person expresseth it) "an admirable advice to comply with our present condition, and suit our minds unto it;" because we cannot bring things to the bent of our own minds, and therefore had better study to conform our mind to our condition, whatsoever it be, whether prosperity or adversity; into which the Divine Wisdom hath divided our life, and so proportioned them one to the other, that none can justly find fault with His disposal, nor, all things considered, tell how to mend them or order them better.

The text thus explained, readily yields us these following observations.

I. The good and prosperous days and times of our life are in God's design given to us as peculiar times of comfort and rejoicing.

II. The evil days, the days and times of our affliction and trouble, are in God's design the proper seasons of recollection and serious consideration.

III. The providence of God hath so contrived it, that our good and evil days, our days of prosperity and adversity, should be intermingled each with the other.

IV. This mixture of good and evil days, is by the Divine Providence so proportioned, that it sufficiently justifies the dealings of God towards the sons of men, and obviates all our discontents and murmurings against Him.

I. The good and prosperous days and times of our life are in God's design given to us as peculiar times of comfort and rejoicing.

"In the day of prosperity be joyful." This is the proper time and season of rejoicing. Prosperity indeed is no prosperity

but to him that rejoiceth in it; and we then only enjoy God's blessings, when we delight and take pleasure in them. And therefore the Preacher doth often in this book exhort us to rejoice in our present good things. Nay, God Himself doth not only allow, but require and command His people to rejoice in the temporal blessings He bestows upon them. So^g, "Ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye, and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee." So again, God commands them, after their offering the first-fruits of their increase, to rejoice and delight themselves in the rest; "And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given thee^h."

Nor is this merely Old Testament doctrine; for in the New Testament, St. Paul tells rich men, that "God hath given them richly all things to enjoyⁱ." Nay, our blessed Lord Himself hath by His own example taught us, that mirth and cheerfulness in the use of the good things of this life, so it be in a due measure and in a due season, is allowable even to Christians. For He vouchsafed to be present, when invited, at a nuptial-feast or wedding-entertainment at Cana in Galilee. Neither was He morose in the company; nay, He was so far from disliking or reproving their mirth, that He promoted and encouraged it; and when the fuel of it, their wine, failed, He was pleased to supply it with a miracle, as we read John ii. 1, &c.

Upon which text the excellent Bucer takes occasion severely to reprove those sour hypocrites of the Anabaptistic sect in his time, who would not allow of any freer use of the good creatures of God, and would frown at any mirth in company, though never so innocent, when in the mean time they themselves were in secret guilty (as the event afterwards shewed) of the vilest abominations. Against these the holy and learned man gives this advice: "Thou that truly fearest God, and sincerely lovest Christ, value not these supercilious despisers of God's blessings; know that every creature of God is good, if thou use it with thanksgiving; avoid luxury, but con-

^g Deut. xii. 7.^h Deut. xxvi. 11.ⁱ [1 Tim. vi. 17.]

demn not temperate or moderate mirth and cheerfulness^k." In short, Christianity, though it be a sober, yet it is no sullen or melancholy religion, as some melancholy men have fancied it, but admits as lawful even the joys and delights of this world, provided we use them lawfully; which is the thing I am next to shew you. For too many are apt to abuse this doctrine to licentiousness. It will be necessary therefore to annex some cautions to it, and they shall be these following.

1. We are to take care that we turn not the goodness of God into wantonness, by abusing the good things of a prosperous condition to riot and excess. Prosperity, when thus abused, is no longer a blessing; it is so far from being so, that it becomes the greatest curse. It is far better to be the poorest and most miserable Lazarus in this world, than to be such a luxurious Dives, such a wicked man in prosperity. He that useth the good things of a prosperous estate to gluttony, drunkenness, and other inordinate pleasures, uses them not as a man, much less as a Christian, but as a "beast that perisheth." Indeed such a man loses the true joy and comfort of God's blessings, by his excess in the use of them. The glutton and the drunkard makes himself sick with those good things which were given him for his health and refreshment. He turns the blessings of God into plagues and punishments, by darkening the serenity of his mind and understanding, and by destroying his health in this world, and his soul in the other. But I proceed to the second caution, which is this.

2. We are to take care in the use of the good things of prosperity, to avoid not only riot and excess, but also all immoderate affection towards them. We are not to set our hearts too much on the enjoyments of this life, nor let out our affections too far after them. We should remember the uncertainty of them, that though we have them to-day, we may lose them to-morrow. We should remember, that adversity usually follows close after prosperity; and therefore in my text, the Wise Man had no sooner said, "In the day of prosperity be joyful," but he presently adds, "In the day of adversity

^k Qui Deum vere times et absque furore Christum amplexus es, mitte istos superciliosos beneficiorum Dei contemptores, scito omnem Dei creaturam bo-

nam esse, modo cum gratiarum actione illa utaris. Luxum vitam, temperatam hilaritatem ne damnato.

consider." And we should remember, that how prosperous soever our estate in this world may be, death will most certainly within a few years, perhaps much sooner, put an end to it.

All the enjoyment that Christianity allows us of the good things of this life, is the present fruition of them, without depending on them for the future; only securing us that we shall enjoy them, as long as God sees it fitting for us. And in this good men have a singular advantage over worldly and wicked men. The men of this world enjoy the good things of this life as their ultimate happiness, beyond which they look no farther; but good men use them as a *viaticum*, or bait, as a present support and refreshment in their pursuit of a far greater happiness. And therefore when the good things of this life fail them, their hope is not deceived, they have another surer and better refuge, even the hope of a most perfect happiness in the life to come. The vicissitudes and changes of the things of this world, of prosperous into evil days, which grieve the minds, and sometimes break the hearts, of worldly men, do scarce so much as trouble the righteous; this being no more than what they expected, and what they had long before prepared themselves for. Besides, they enjoy their present good things as the effects of God's favour and peculiar kindness to them; and they are sure that whenever He shall please to change the scene, it shall be for their good. And upon this account they are secure in their present enjoyments, and need not be solicitous or over-much concerned for the future.

But as for the ungodly, it is not so with them. They cannot so comfortably enjoy their present happiness, and they have no security for the future; but when they say Peace, peace, unto themselves, sudden destruction may (and, if they repent not, assuredly will) come upon them.

To conclude this consideration, it is an excellent advice that St. Paul gives us with relation to all temporal both enjoyments and afflictions¹; "This I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, therefore, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not;

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 29—31.

and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." As if he had said, Our life in this world being so short, it is no very great matter how it fares with us here; we should not be over-much concerned about our state and condition, whatsoever it be, whether prosperous or afflictive. If we enjoy good things, let us not cleave in our affections too close to them, for they will ere long leave us with this present life. Or if we are in misery and trouble here, let us not be dejected; for if we be true Christians, death when it comes will put an end to all our sorrows, and place us in a state of unmixed and perfect happiness. Or more briefly thus: Whether we be in the number of those that "rejoice," or of those that "weep," in this world, let not either our joy or sorrow be immoderate, for they will both soon end in death; and a state of things will presently follow in the other life, wherein our joy or sorrow shall be everlasting. Let not therefore the little concerns of this transient world, but those far greater ones of the eternal state, take up our thoughts and affections, and possess our souls. I proceed to a third cation, which is this.

3. That we take care to use the good things of our prosperous days so, as to rejoice more in the goodness of God that gives them, than in the good things themselves.

This indeed is to "rejoice in the Lord;" this is to answer the design and end of God in giving those good things to us. For He gave them not to us that we should settle our affections on them; but that by them, as tokens of His love, we should be led to Him, to love and serve Him; and of a pledge of a far greater happiness which He will hereafter give us if we so do. The worldly man looks not to the Giver, but to the gift itself; and, on the other side, the good man adores the Giver more than the gift. The carnal man worships second causes, but the spiritual man gives all honour to the First Cause of all things. He thus reasons with himself: O the goodness of my God, who hath thus laden me with His blessings! And if God be thus good to me in this life, what may I not expect from Him, if I continue faithfully to serve Him, in the other! Great is my reward here, but how inexpressibly greater will it be here-

after! "O how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee^m!"

4. We should take care to use our prosperity as a furtherance, help, and encouragement to us in the service of God. This doubtless is the main design and end of the Divine Providence, in bestowing the good things of prosperity upon us, that by them we might be animated and the better enabled to serve and glorify Him who is the Giver of them.

It is a remarkable text to this purpose that we read concerning Jehoshaphatⁿ; "And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; but sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in His commandments, and not after the doings of Israel: therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance. And" his heart was lift up in the ways of the Lord: "moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah."

Jehoshaphat's heart by his wonderful prosperity was not lifted up either against God or man; but, on the contrary, it was lifted up in the ways of the Lord; *i. e.* by his wealth and greatness he was encouraged and strengthened in his endeavour to promote the honour of God, by establishing His true worship, and destroying idolatry. Thus, when we are in prosperity, we must be raised by it to a zeal for the honour of God who gave it, and to a diligent study how to glorify the Author of all our blessings. The thoughts of the good man in prosperity will be like those of David^o, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord," &c.

5. We should take care, that our joy in the day of prosperity transport us not into pride, or a vain opinion of ourselves, and contempt of others that are below us. This caution against pride is frequently urged by the Holy Ghost in Scripture, and pressed on those that are in a prosperous state. So^p, "Beware, lest when thou hast eaten and art full, &c. then thine

^m Psalm xxxi. 19.

ⁿ 2 Chron. xvii. 3, &c.

^o Psalm cxvi. 12—14.

^p Deut. viii. 12. 14.

heart be lifted up." So St. Paul in his instructions to Timothy⁹, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded."

We must take care that our prosperity be adorned with true humility; imitating herein the holy Patriarch Jacob, who from a poor and small beginning, being blessed by God with a wonderful affluence of the good things of this life, thus humbly addresses himself to God the Giver of them: "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands^r."

We should remember, that we have nothing but what we have received from God, as the effect of His mere mercy, and not any desert of our own; and that there are multitudes of good men, and some of them far better than ourselves, who have far less of the good things of this life than we have: and from thence we should learn not to overvalue ourselves upon account of any outward blessing, and that worldly prosperity in itself is no distinguishing mark of God's special favour. It will prove to us, according as we use or abuse it.

We should remember, lastly, the strict account we must render to God of those temporal good things which He hath given us. And if we do well consider this, we shall be so far from being lifted up into pride by our prosperity, that we shall rather be possessed with a holy fear and care how to discharge our duties therein.

6. And lastly, We must be sure to join our prosperity with charity; *i. e.* so rejoice in our own prosperity, as not to forget the adversity of others. The rich man in the parable^s, went not to hell for his being rich, or for the mere enjoyment of his riches, but for his luxury and excess in the use of them, and for his uncharitableness and want of pity to poor Lazarus in his distress and misery.

It is the highest ingratitude, and the greatest sin, for a man to receive abundance of good things from God, and to do little or no good to his neighbour. We do not rejoice in our prosperity aright, unless we cause the poor and miserable to rejoice

⁹ 1 Ep. vi. 17.

^r Gen. xxxii. 10.

^s Luke xvi.

with us, by a charitable relief of their wants and necessities. And therefore it is remarkable, that God Himself, at the same time when He bids us "rejoice in the good things which He hath given us," requires us to make others also, the poor and indigent, to be partakers of our joy; He will by no means allow us in our prosperity to rejoice alone. So^t, "And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you." So again^u, "And thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the fatherless and the widow that are among you."

In a word, that joy in the day of prosperity that is not accompanied with this charity, shall at last end in the greatest and most dismal sorrow. Hell will undoubtedly be the portion of the prosperous uncharitable man, as our Saviour plainly teaches us in the forementioned parable.

All these cautions are necessary to be observed in our rejoicing "in the day of prosperity." And with these cautions we may and ought to rejoice in those temporal blessings and good things which the Divine Providence hath bestowed upon us. I shall now only apply this first observation as thus explained, and so for the present conclude.

1. This discourse serves to reprove those who are so far from rejoicing, that they are sullen and discontented even "in the day of prosperity."

God hath blessed them with health and wealth, with peace and plenty, and yet they have no peace in themselves, but are disquieted and unsatisfied. They want, and would have they know not what; and are troubled, they know not well why or wherefore. They envy them that are above them; they think themselves to be in a worse condition than those that are really below them.

If indeed, in the midst of their outward prosperity, they were inwardly troubled for the concern of their souls, they were to be excused, yea commended. But this is not the case of the men with whom we have now to do. Our reproof is directed against

^t Deut. xxvi. 11.

^u Deut. xvi. 11.

those who are discontented in and with their outward prosperity, either because it is not so great as that of others, or because there is something wanting in it; as indeed there will be always something defective in the best estate and condition of men in this world. For the royal Psalmist assures us^x, “Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Every man in every state, (even the most prosperous,) is in every respect vanity^y,” *i. e.* the best condition of man in this life, compared to the perfect happiness of the other, is perfect vanity, so that there is no such thing as prosperity in this world, if that estate only shall be accounted prosperous wherein there is nothing at all defective or wanting. But this is a very false notion of prosperity. He that hath many blessings and good things of this life, wherein he may rejoice, though he want, or fancy that he wants many other things, yea, though he be under some inconveniences or lesser troubles, yet this man lives “in the day of prosperity,” if he could but think so, and to him undoubtedly belongs the advice in my text: “In the day of prosperity be joyful.” But alas! some men will never know, can never tell, when “the day of prosperity” is come; though they be never so prosperous, yet they will still think themselves to be miserable; and what providence can make such men happy? What shall I say to them? They highly deserve, they dearly need, they loudly call for “the day of adversity,” that by their own sad experience they might learn the real difference between prosperity and adversity, and what the one as well as the other is, and so at last come to know when they are well.

2. This serves for the reproof of such who being in prosperity deny themselves the enjoyment of it, and in the midst of their happiness are miserable through their own penuriousness.

They tantalize themselves, and being up to the chin in an affluence of the good things of this life, will scarce afford themselves one sip of the flowing stream. These men are elegantly described by the Wise Man in this book of Ecclesiastes^z; “There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: a man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that

^x Psalm xxxix. 5.

nino vanitas.

^y Omnis homo in omni statu est om-

z Chap. vi. 1, 2.

he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease." This man, in the midst of his abundance and riches, can scarce afford himself necessities. He is so close a keeper of his wealth, that he keeps it, not only from others, but even from himself. And for whom? Commonly for a stranger, one that hath no affinity to him: and who not only eats of his plenty, but eats it out, *i. e.* consumes and devours it; it being the usual fate of the miser to have a prodigal for his heir. What shall we say to the men of this wretched temper? they will live miserably here, as it were in despite of God's good providence; and, without repentance, through the righteous judgment of God, they shall be for ever miserable hereafter, whether they will or no.

3. And lastly; Let all such as rejoice in a prosperous state be sure to temper their joy with a due care, lest their prosperity betray them into sin and folly. Let them always remember the cautions before given to this purpose. And let not any man presume so far on his own integrity and constancy of resolution, as to think he needs them not.

The Almighty God, the Searcher of hearts, Who knows our frame and temper infinitely better than we do ourselves, doth frequently in His holy word caution even His own people, and earnestly press them to take great heed, lest they be corrupted by their prosperity. So^a, "And it shall be, when the Lord thy God hath brought thee into the land which He sware unto thy fathers, &c. When thou shalt have eaten and be full; then beware lest thou forget the Lord," &c. Again^b, "For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, &c. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He giveth thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full, &c. then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God." And^c, "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth," &c.

^a Deut. vi. 10—12.

^c Ver. 18.

^b Deut. viii. 7—12. inclusive.

In these and the like places of Scripture, the good and gracious God represents Himself to us after the manner of men in complianee with our infirmity. He seems to give His people prosperity *tremula manu*, “with a trembling hand,” fearing at the same time, when He intends to do them good, lest He should do them hurt; as if He had said, Behold! I give you these outward good things, which men think very good and desirable, as indeed they are, if a good use be made of them; but as good as they are, there is danger in the use and enjoyment of them; therefore look to yourselves, and take heed you do not abuse them to your own hurt. My thoughts in giving you these things are thoughts of love and kindness; I design them as blessings to you; but beware, lest through your own folly you turn them into a curse. This, I say, is the plain sense and meaning of those places of Scripture, wherein God gives such repeated cautions to men, to whom He gives plenty and prosperity.

It is a remarkable passage in the life of the excellent Dr. Hammond, that upon the approach of the restoration of King Charles the Second to his kingdoms, knowing the great advancement in the Church that was already designed for him, though he rejoiced as much as any man in the public happiness, yet he was really troubled at the nearness of his own temporal felicity. He started back from that which others hunt after and eagerly pursue, and was afraid of what most men passionately desire, a prosperous state; which he expressed to one of his friends with the greatest concernment of an earnest melting passion in these words: “I must confess,” said he, “I never saw the time in all my life, wherein I could so cheerfully say my *Nunc dimittis* as now. Indeed I do dread prosperity, I do really dread it.” And it pleased God to give him his wish and choice: for some weeks before his Majesty landed in this kingdom, that holy soul was translated to a better place. I doubt not but it was an excess of humility in that incomparable person, which caused these his fears. For certainly if any man, one of his confirmed, radicated, and even heroic virtue, might and would have been very safe in a prosperous condition. But indeed, to the generality of men, prosperity is questionless full of hazard and danger.

Hence Solomon, the wisest of mere mortal and fallen men, tells us, "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them^d." Foolish men are ruined and undone by their prosperity; and therefore it is a wise and weighty petition which we have in the excellent Litany of our Church, "In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth, Good Lord deliver us." We are in great danger, not only in the time of want, but also in the time of wealth; not only "in the day of adversity," but also "in the day of prosperity;" and from this danger we are earnestly to pray that God would deliver us.

Let this therefore be your daily prayer; and if with this prayer you keep in memory the cautions before given you, you are safe. But especially be sure you forget not the fifth caution, to join your prosperity with charity. Without this, I am persuaded, (saith an excellent author,) the danger of prosperity neither can nor ever will be avoided, *i. e.* without being fruitful in good works, and liberal and openhanded to the relief of the poor, and also to the furtherance of all pious and sacred uses, as occasion offers itself. It is St. Paul's charge^e; "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate," &c. To which Solomon's advice is to be added^f; "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase." God requires this as a tribute, whereby we should acknowledge Him to be the Giver of what we have. "Away with words, (as the same author goes on,) or mere verbal thanksgivings. God is thy landlord, and He requires a lord's rent; those who use not to pay it, will soon forget who is their landlord; which is the proper fountain of all the evil that comes by abundance." Nay, he that thinks this tribute of his goods is not due to God, doth already disclaim his landlord, and deny God to be his Lord.

The sum of all that I have said upon this first observation, is this: A prosperous condition in this world is a blessing of God, wherein we not only may, but ought to rejoice; and I think I may safely say, we sin if we do not: for it is the command of God in my text, "In the day of prosperity be joyful."

^d Prov. i. 32.

^f Prov. iii. 9.

^e 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

But yet prosperity is then only a real blessing, when we are truly thankful to God for it; when we take a moderate delight and satisfaction in it; when we soberly make use of the good things God hath given us for ourselves, and out of our plenty supply the poverty of others, according to our proportion and ability; when we walk humbly with our God and with our neighbour, and honour the Lord with our substance; and, in a word, when we make use of our temporal prosperity, as a help and furtherance to our eternal happiness.

I conclude all with the excellent Collect and Prayer of our Church on the fourth Sunday after Trinity.

“O God, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy: that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, WE MAY SO PASS THROUGH THINGS TEMPORAL, THAT WE FINALLY LOSE NOT THE THINGS ETERNAL. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ’s sake, our Lord and Saviour.”

To Whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most due, all honour and glory, might, majesty, and dominion, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON XVII.

ADVERSITY THE PROPER SEASON OF SERIOUS CONSIDERATION; AND SO CONTRIVED BY THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD, THAT IT SHOULD BE INTERMIXED WITH PROSPERITY: AND THIS MIXTURE OF GOOD AND EVIL SO PROPORTIONED BY THE SAME PROVIDENCE, THAT IT OBVIATES ALL DISCONTENT AND MURMURING AGAINST GOD.

Eccles. vii. 14.

In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

IN my entrance on this text, having shewn the connection of it with the preceding verses, and fully explained it, I raised these plain and useful propositions and observations from it.

I. The good and prosperous days and times of our life are in God's design given to us, as peculiar times of comfort and rejoicing.

II. The evil days, the days and times of our affliction and trouble, are in God's design the proper seasons of recollection and serious consideration.

III. The providence of God hath so contrived it, that our good and evil days, our days of prosperity and adversity, should be intermingled each with the other.

IV. This mixture of good and evil days is by the Divine Providence so proportioned, that it sufficiently justifies the dealings of God towards the sons of men, and obviates all our discontents and murmurings against Him.

I have already despatched the first of these observations, and therein endeavoured fully to instruct you in the right use of a prosperous state. I proceed now to the second observation.

II. The evil days, the days and times of our affliction and trouble, are in God's design the proper seasons of recollection and serious consideration.

"But in the day of adversity consider." And indeed if then we do not consider, we shall never consider; if sadness will not make us serious, nothing will. But what are we to consider "in the day of adversity?"

1. We are to consider from whom the adversity or affliction comes. And here we are to look above all secondary causes and instruments to God, Who is above all, by Whose either efficacious operation, or wise and just permission, every evil of affliction, that befalls us, happens to us. This is the plain doctrine of God Himself, by His Prophet Amos^a; "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" No, certainly. God is the great Disposer of all the evils of affliction that happen to us. This consideration will be of mighty force to make us submit to the present adversity or affliction under which we labour. It is God's doing, (by whatever means or instruments it comes to pass,) and therefore we must submit. This was the argument which induced holy Job to a patient submission; "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord^b." He looked not to the secondary causes that had robbed him of his wealth, and his children too, for whom his wealth was provided, but to God the supreme Governor and Disposer of all things. It is true, sometimes we bring affliction and trouble on ourselves, through our own sin and folly. But even in this case, there is a hand of God, for some former sin or sins, justly permitting us to fall into such sin and folly. Wherefore in such cases we are indeed to blame ourselves; but we are also to acknowledge the righteous judgment of God, and seriously to enquire after that sin which provoked God to leave us, and suffer us to fall into that folly.

2. We are to consider for what God sends the adversity or affliction on us. And here generally it is true, that it is sent for some sin or sins of ours that have deserved it. Generally, I say, but not always. For Job's afflictions were sent on him from God, by way of trial of his virtues. Yet even in this case,

^a Chap. iii. 6.

^b Job i. 21.

there was some antecedent or foregoing sin that might deserve those afflictions, though there had been no occasion of trial. And therefore Job himself, though he would never acknowledge any insincerity or hypocrisy, or greater crime, for which those evils befel him; yet he often acknowledgeth himself to be a sinner, that had deserved as much as he suffered, with respect to the strict justice and righteousness of God. But generally, I say, it is true, that our afflictions come upon us for our sins, and therefore we ought to bear them patiently, according to that of the Prophet, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him^c."

3. We are to consider with what end and design God sends adversity and affliction on us. It is with a design of love and kindness, unless we be such as have continually hardened our hearts against former afflictions, and thereby rendered ourselves incorrigible. Excepting this case, all afflictions that befall us are designed in love and kindness to us, to bring us to repentance, or to further our repentance, and make us better by a greater hatred of sin, and by a more zealous prosecution of virtue and goodness.

This doctrine is plainly taught us by a Prophet of the Lord^d; "But though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies; for He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men:" as if he had said, God doth not afflict men for affliction's sake, as if He took delight in their sorrows, but out of kindness and love to do them good, to make them good when nothing else will. So the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews^e: "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence:

^c Micah vii. 9.^e Chap. xii. verse 5 to 12 inclusively.^d Lament. iii. 32, 33.

shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Let this then be fixed in our minds, and the settled resolution of our thoughts, that our afflictions are the effects of God's goodness and loving-kindness to us, and then we shall not only bear them patiently, but receive them thankfully, accounting our afflictions to be mercies, according to that of David^f; "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes."

4. And lastly, "In the day of adversity" we are to consider how and by what means we may be freed from our adversity. For God doth not require us to lie down, like the brute creature under his burden, without any endeavour to be eased of it; but allows us wisely to consider of the means to free ourselves from it. And here the best, yea, the only way, is to make God our hope and refuge; and to consider that as He sent the affliction, so He only is able to remove it; and that He is as willing as He is able to do this, if in the first place we apply ourselves to Him accordingly, by unfeigned repentance, by earnest prayer, and by an humble acknowledgment of His righteous hand in our present distress, and then use such lawful means as Providence offers to us. This is the right way of freeing ourselves from adversity. But there are other ways that vain men seek to; they endeavour to be rid of their poverty by wronging or stealing from others, and of their losses by having recourse to the instruments of Satan. This is a sin which every Christian ought to dread and tremble at. When God throws thee down, beg Him to raise thee up again; when He smites, look to Him alone for the cure. Hear what God Himself says^g; "See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no God with Me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand."

Thus we are to consider "in the day of adversity," who sent

^f Psalm cxix. 71.

^g Deut. xxxii. 39.

the adversity, for what it was sent, with what end and design it is inflicted on us, and how we may be freed from it. It is sent by God, whatever the instrumental causes may be; it is generally sent as a punishment for our sin, though sometimes chiefly by way of trial. It is sent with a gracious design of love and kindness to us; and the only way to be freed from it, so as either to be wholly rid of it, or to have it sanctified unto us, is to have recourse to God by faith and repentance. To apply this.

I. This may serve for the reproof of those, who "in the day of adversity" are so far from considering, that they are stupid and senseless, and have no regard at all to the hand of God upon them, but harden their hearts against Him; and, after one affliction upon another, are still as wretched and as wicked as ever, and never consider either the true cause of their affliction, or the right way of removing it. Flee they will to their pleasures or diversions, or to any thing else, rather than enter into a serious and religious consideration of the causes and ends of their present affliction. The Prophet Isaiah from God denounces a woe against these men^h; "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue till night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of His hands;" *i. e.* Woe unto them that give themselves to sensual pleasures, even "in the day of adversity," the time of serious recollection and consideration; and even then are so far from being alarmed and awakened to repentance, that they have no regard at all to the afflicting hand of God, either upon themselves or others. These men offer the highest affront to the almighty and most merciful God; they tremble not at His power and justice, and despise His mercy; all these attributes of His being concerned in their affliction.

2. This may serve for the reproof of those, who, on the other side, are too sensible of their adversity in the day thereof, so sensible, as to be driven almost into despair and distraction. These men, when God smites them, cry out too loudly, and are put into a strange and unreasonable passion, excluding all friendly advice

^h Chap. v. 11, 12.

and counsel. They are little better than distracted persons in their affliction, especially if it be a great one, vexing and afflicting themselves beyond measure, and all to no purpose. For religious consideration is the only remedy in the day of adversity. "In the day of adversity" do not fret thyself, but "consider." Against both these extremes "in the day of adversity," both that of stupidity and that of despondency, of being sensible of the afflicting hand of God either too little, or not at all, or too much, the wisest of men, speaking by the wisdom of God, excellently cautions usⁱ; "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews renders the last clause thus, "nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him."

Here are two extremes noted, which men respectively are apt to fall into "in the day of adversity," either to despise the afflicting hand of God, or to faint and sink under it; and both are to be avoided as we love our souls, and desire a happy issue out of the affliction. I now proceed to the third observation, which was this.

III. The providence of God hath so contrived it, that our good and evil days, our days of prosperity and adversity, should be intermingled each with the other.

For my text saith, "God hath set the one over against the other," *i. e.* "the day of adversity" against "the day of prosperity," each against the other, so as to answer and succeed one another in the course of our lives.

It is observed by some, that all God's works, both of creation and providence in the present state of things, are *ἀντίστοιχα*, "set in opposition one against the other." After darkness we see the light, the pleasing, welcome light; and after we have enjoyed the light a while, melancholy darkness follows; and night and day succeed one the other by a never-failing revolution. Fair and cloudy days are intermingled in our calendar. Our age in this world is made up of so many summers and winters; the sun one season being to us in his exaltation, and then another part of the year in his declension; one while the sun scorcheth us, and another the frost nips us; only the gracious providence of God hath so ordered it, that we

ⁱ Prov. iii. 11.

pass from one of these extremes to the other, not all of a sudden, but by the intermediate and leisurely spaces of spring and autumn; we go from the winter through the spring to the summer, and then from the summer through the autumn back again into the winter.

One while we sleep, and are the images of dead men; and anon we awake, and as it were live again, and are shadows of our future resurrection.

The very constitution of our bodies is made up of contraries, heat and cold, moisture and drought, perpetually conflicting with each other. Yea, we live and breathe by the same vicissitude of contraries, by a systole and diastole; our hearts one while extending and lifting up themselves, and presently again contracting themselves and falling; and all our other pulses follow the same method.

And thus it is in God's works of providence, "the day of prosperity" and "the day of adversity," our good and evil days, interchangeably succeed each the other. No man on this side hath so miserable, but that he hath some lucid intervals, some intervening spaces of joy and comfort; and, on the other hand, no man is so perfectly happy in this world, but that some evil accidents now and then befall him, to give an alloy to his happiness. Our life is chequered with white and black, with sad and gladsome days. And every man, that hath lived any time in the world, is convinced by his own experience of the truth of what the Wise Man tells us in the text already mentioned^k, that "there is a time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance." No man's time is wholly taken up either by joy or sorrow, but each of these hath his share therein, according to that proportion which God in His infinite wisdom sees most meet. And so I pass from this to the next observation; which, when I have handled, I shall make application of both together, and so conclude my discourse on this text.

IV. This mixture of good and evil days is by the Divine Providence so proportioned, that it sufficiently justifies the dealings of God toward the sons of men, and obviates all our discontents and murmurings against Him.

^k Eccles. iii. 4.

This I shewed you is the most probable meaning of those words in the text, "God hath set the one," &c. to the end that "man should find nothing after Him," *i. e.* "God:" viz. That the mixture of our good and evil days, one with the other, is such that when in the issue a man shall trace the footsteps of the Divine Providence, and recollect all God's dealings towards him, he will be able to find no fault in the whole course of that providence; nor shall he justly blame either the justice, or wisdom, or goodness of God. He shall be forced to confess, that he had as much prosperity as was useful, and no more adversity than was necessary for him: the result whereof is this, that it is man's best way and course to commit and submit himself to the Divine disposal, and entirely to acquiesce in it, in all the periods of his life on earth.

This was the very argument whereby holy Job brought himself to a submission unto God's providence, even in the greatest trial and calamity¹; "What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" As if he should have said, We are not to expect that it should be always day, and never night, that the sun of prosperity should continually shine on us, without any cloud intervening, that a perpetual course of good things should happen to us without interruption, that we should see only good days, and never any evil ones; this is a perfectly vain and foolish conceit.

There is a great deal of reason and justice, yea, goodness and mercy, in that providence of God, whereby our good and evil days are mingled with each other; as will appear by these few following considerations.

1. If all the days of our life were without the evil of sin, we might have some colour of reason to expect they should be without the evil of adversity also; though this would be only a colour of reason; for God may justly afflict an innocent creature, *jure Domini*, by His right of dominion and sovereignty over all His creatures, at least as to a temporary affliction, which He recompenseth with an equivalent or a greater good. But, I say, if we had no days of sin, it were more tolerable in us to expect that no days of adversity should befall us. If we were all good in our carriage towards God, we

¹ Job ii. 10.

might presume that God would be all good in His providence to us; and that if our obedience were uniform, even, and uninterrupted, that our prosperity should be so too. But, alas! it is quite otherwise. Many, very many have been our days of sin, and therefore we have no reason at all to complain, if we see some days of sorrow. The Wise Man, in this very same book of Ecclesiastes, and in this same chapter^m, tells us, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doth good, and sinneth not;" *i. e.* that hath done good so evenly and constantly, but that sometime he hath fallen into sin. No man's life so fair, as to have no moles or blemishes; no man's escutcheon so untainted, but that it hath some blots in it. "There is not a just man" (בְּאֶרֶץ) "upon earth." The just indeed, the saints in heaven, do not, cannot sin, but are ἀναμάρτητοι, "sinless," as the angels of God. And accordingly in heaven, where there is no sin, there shall be no sorrow, but perfect, perpetual, uninterrupted felicity and happiness; but on "earth there is not a just man who sins not." And if the best of men do evil, shall we think it strange that the best of men suffer evil? But, alas! the generality even of good men have a greater abundance of dross in them, that must be purged away by adversity and affliction. And shall we grumble at a little sorrow, that have so much sin? Yea, rather let us bless God, Who hath spared us so much, and punished us so little, and confess the truth with the people of God in the book of Ezraⁿ; "Thou, O God, hast punished us less" (far less) "than our iniquities deserve."

2. Consider, that our good days are generally more in number than our evil days, our days of prosperity (such, I mean, as is suitable to our condition and circumstances,) than our days of adversity. This is most certain, though most of us are apt to cast up our accounts otherwise. How many days (of at least competent) health have we enjoyed for one day of grievous sickness! How many days of ease, for one of pain! How many blessings, for a few crosses! For one danger that hath surprised us, how many scores of dangers have we escaped, and some of them very narrowly! But, alas! we write our mercies in the dust, but our afflictions we engrave in marble; our memories serve us too well to remember the latter, but we are strangely

^m Viz. chap. vii. 20.ⁿ Chap. ix. 13.

forgetful of the former. And this is the greatest cause of our unthankfulness, discontent, and murmuring.

It is storied of a priest of Neptune, the reputed god of the sea among the heathens, that when he shewed to one of Neptune's votaries the many offerings hung up in his temple, of those that by their devotions to him had been saved from shipwreck; the votary answered, "But where are the offerings of the many more worshippers of Neptune, that have perished in the waves of the sea, and been lost in the deep?" But in the present case we may reverse the story. When men represent the many evils that they have suffered from our God, the only true God, so dismally as if their whole life had been a continual tragedy, and a perpetual scene of sorrow and calamity; we may justly bespeak every such person thus: But, O unthankful man! where are all the blessings that God hath bestowed on thee? where are all the good things thou hast received from thy God? Hast thou utterly lost the far greater catalogue of His mercies? Are these quite out of thy remembrance? For shame, keep a better account of God's dealings towards thee, and let not one affliction, though very grievous, drown and swallow up an hundred mercies conferred on thee!

3. Consider that there is none of our days so evil, but that there is some mixture of mercy and of God's goodness in them. Pure and unmixed evil is the portion only of the damned; there is no such thing to be found on this side hell. In this life it is most certain, that God doth, as the Prophet expresseth it^o, "in wrath remember mercy," tempering our evils with something of good to allay them. At the same time we have reason to complain to God, we have no reason to complain of Him, but much to praise and bless His holy Name for those mercies, which at that very time we enjoy from Him. Generally if we ourselves are sick, our children and many of our friends and relations are well. When we want health, other circumstances for the most part occur to render our sickness more easy and supportable. If we lose our sight, our memory strangely serves to supply that sad defect. If we cannot see, we can hear; and if we cannot hear, we can see; and all our senses together seldom fail us, till death seize us as his prey. If one of our children miscarry, and

^o Hab. iii. 2.

prove a child of sorrow to us, another doth well, and is our joy and comfort. If some insult over our calamity, others pity and assist us in it. If some unjustly calumniate and reproach us, there are others that will do right to our reputation. And finally, there is no so grievous outward affliction befalling any of God's faithful servants, but that there is still an answerable inward assistance and comfort administered from God to support him under it: that promise of God to St. Paul being not peculiar to him, but extending itself to every good man in the same or the like circumstances^p; "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

4. And lastly, consider that adversity is needful to correct the errors of prosperity. If we knew how to use our good days well, we should have none, or fewer evil days. But, alas! we do not. The art of using prosperity aright, none of us are perfectly skilled in; and therefore it is necessary that days of adversity should be intermingled with our days of prosperity, that the one might remedy the evils of the other. For,

1. If all our days were days of prosperity, we should be apt to look on prosperity either as a debt due to our very nature, or as the portion of our fate, not acknowledging the free goodness of God as the fountain of it. But, on the other side, whenever and anon we taste of adversity, we are thereby convinced, that prosperity is no inseparable property of our nature, or necessary effect of our fate and destiny; but the gift of some free cause, that one while distributes good things to us, another while evil things, as He pleaseth; *i. e.* the gift of God.

2. If all our days were days of prosperity, without interruption, we should not duly prize our prosperity, nor taste the fuller sweetness of it. For such is our folly, that we learn to prize good things, chiefly by our want of them, and by experience of the evils opposite to them: *Contraria juxta se posita*, &c. "Contraries set against and compared with each other, appear in their clearest colours." How sweet doth health taste and relish after a sharp and tedious sickness! How doth that man rejoice in a moderate fortune, as if it were riches and abundance, that is newly emerged and crept out of want and poverty! How welcome is our own home, though but homely,

after durance in a house of imprisonment ! How doth that man prize his safety, and the very liberty of treading firmly on the common earth, that hath newly escaped the danger of shipwreck ! In a word, how thankful are we even for common mercies, after we have learned the worth of them, by a dear and sad want of them !

3. If we ourselves knew no adversity, we should be unapt to pity others in their adversity, which yet is a great duty incumbent on all Christians. We shall never know how to compassionate the evils that our brethren suffer, unless we ourselves have some time or other felt the very same or the like evils ourselves. Christ Himself, as man, learned compassion to His brethren by His own sufferings^a. How much more do we sinners need this experience, to make us pitiful and compassionate to others in their calamity !

4. If we never saw any days of adversity, we should want an occasion and opportunity of exercising some of our chiefest virtues, and consequently of receiving the fuller reward of them. What occasion of patience in suffering evils, if no evil happened to us ! What opportunity of submitting to God's will, if things still fell out according to our own !

5. If we knew no adversity, we should want one of the surest trials, and consequently the certain comfort of our sincerity. "The day of adversity" is the day of trial, whether our religion towards God be sound at the bottom. If we can still love God, even when He smites us, and writes bitter things against us, and seems to hate us ; if we can still trust on Him, and cleave to Him, though He seem to "slay us," (as Job expresseth it ;) then is our love to Him, and trust on Him, sincere and solid. And from the knowledge of our sincerity, a far greater comfort arises to us, than all our worldly prosperity can possibly afford us. Nay, this will sweeten our succeeding prosperity ; for if we find that we have loved God in adversity, we may be sure that our following prosperity is an effect of His love to us.

6. And lastly, if all the days of our life were days of prosperity, we should certainly love this life too much, and set our hearts upon this present world, not minding or seeking after, as we ought, the things of a better life. And therefore God

^a Heb. ii. 17, 18.

hath so tempered the occurrences of this life, so mingled our days of prosperity with intervening days of adversity, that we should not fix our habitation, or place our happiness here; but that we should "so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal." If without interruption we enjoyed our imaginary heaven here, we should never at all, or very carelessly, mind and seek after our real heaven hereafter; and so should be undone for ever.

Upon all these accounts it is apparent, that there is a great deal of justice, equity, wisdom, yea, and goodness of God, in that providence of His, whereby He hath set "the day of adversity" against "the day of prosperity," intermingling the occurrences of this life with good and evil.

I shall now conclude my whole discourse upon this text with a short exhortation.

Let us all wisely accommodate ourselves to this mixed providence of God; and under which soever of its dispensations we are or shall be, whether that of prosperity, or the other of adversity, let us endeavour to do our duty, and to answer the design of Providence therein. When we are in a prosperous state, let us rejoice and be thankful; but let our joy be moderate, remembering that adversity may, and some time or other will come upon us, and accordingly preparing ourselves for it. It is a common vanity of men in prosperity, to depend too much upon its stability and continuance, to grow secure, and lay aside all due and serious thoughts of future troubles. Even holy David confesses himself to have been some time guilty of this folly^r; "And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by Thy favour Thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide Thy face, and I was in trouble."

When Saul was dead, and David was crowned king over Judah and Israel, he then thought himself in a state of prosperity, as stable and immoveable as Mount Sion, on which his royal palace stood, and fancied that all his troubles were now at an end. But he was deceived; God after that hid His face, drew a cloud, a black and dismal cloud, of trouble and affliction over all his splendour and glory. For as after his first being

^r Psalm xxx. 6, 7.

crowned king of Judah, he was for seven years together exercised with troubles from his enemies of the house of Saul; so after his second coronation, as king both of Judah and Israel, other troubles assaulted him; the most pungent of which was the unnatural rebellion and most miserable ruin of his son Absalom. By this example, (to which many others might be added,) let us learn not to build too much upon our present prosperity; and though we may seem to be in the most firm and settled state of secular happiness, yet not to be so vain as to think ourselves secure from all future troubles.

This is most certain, (howsoever we may escape in the general course of our lives,) there is one day of adversity which will infallibly come upon every one of us, and that is the day of our death; a day that will try the faith, patience, and fortitude of the best and most prepared Christian; but indeed will be a day of the deepest adversity to all such as are not beforehand, by a lively faith and effectual repentance, provided against it.

Let such considerations as these frequently enter into our thoughts, and check and restrain all excess and extravagance of our joy “in the day of prosperity.”

On the other side, in our adversity let us neither be insensible nor too sensible of it; let us consider, but not despair; let us submit to God’s will, trust in His goodness, amend what is amiss in our lives; and in this way comfort ourselves with the assured hope of a good day to follow, if not here, yet certainly hereafter.

In a word, let us not fix upon any state of things in this world; for here there is nothing certain, nothing uniform, nothing constant; our present life being a variable, mixed state, made up of joy and sorrow; of days of prosperity, and days of adversity too, by very uncertain vicissitudes, and turns succeeding each other. Let us therefore raise our hearts above this world, and before all things desire, and with our greatest labour and diligence endeavour, after that unmixed state of happiness proposed to us in the other world; and if we do so, we shall there meet with no adversity, no trouble or sorrow at all, but shall have all joy, and rejoice always even to eternal ages.

To which blessed state, God of His infinite mercy bring us

all, through the merits of His only Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

To Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON XVIII.

THAT IT IS A VERY SINFUL AND VAIN THING FOR ANY MAN SO TO GLORY IN HIS OWN WISDOM, STRENGTH, OR WEALTH, AS TO PLACE HIS TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN EITHER OR ALL OF THEM.

Jer. ix. 23, 24.

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

IT is generally agreed by the best interpreters, that my text hath reference to the preceding verses, even from the beginning of this chapter. Wherein the holy Prophet predicts and foretels things so direful to God's people, and that with so feeling a sense of them, that he himself seems to have suffered little less in the prophecy, than they should in the event of it. He begins thus; "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people^a!" As if he had said, I think I can never grieve sufficiently for the dismal slaughter and destruction which I foresee will shortly befall the people of the Jews. "My people," *i. e.* my dear countrymen, the people to whom God hath sent me, as His Prophet, the people whom I affectionately love, and whose welfare I wish as much as, yea, much more, than mine own.

^a Ver. 1.

In the following verses he most elegantly and pathetically describes both the great sins of the Jews, the causes of God's judgments, and the judgments themselves that should come upon them for those sins; one while sadly reflecting on the one, and then with a no less passion of sorrow passing to the other.

And, after all, as well knowing the obdurate and stubborn temper of the Jews, that they would be apt to slight even this dreadful prophecy of his, and fancy that they might escape the threatened destruction, either by their policy and cunning, or by their power and strength, or by their wealth and riches: he, or rather the Divine Spirit in him, seasonably obviates and meets with this vain conceit of theirs in the words of my text: "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." As if he had said, This calamity which I predict, no wisdom of yours can prevent, no power or strength of yours shall be able to resist, nor are all your riches and treasures sufficient to redeem you from it; and therefore trust not in any or all of these, but make God your refuge, who only can save you from the evils threatened, or preserve you under them.

This is the connection of my text with what went before in this chapter. I shall now immediately betake myself to the text itself; which I shall first carefully explain, and then raise my observations upon it.

And first for the explanation, "Thus saith the Lord." A solemn preface of God's holy Prophets to conciliate authority, and to excite the reverent attention of their hearers to what they are about to say; and it always leads the way to something of great weight and moment following, such as is the matter of my text. And accordingly, let me bespeak, yea, in the name of God command and challenge, the awful attention of all that hear me this day, from the greatest to the least; for it is not I say it, but "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his

wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches," &c.

"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom." By wisdom may be understood all that knowledge universally, which may seem any way perfective of the mind of man, besides the saving knowledge of God. But by the context we are led to that wisdom especially, which we call prudence, and hath respect to the actions and affairs of human life, and consists in a due contrivance and disposition of means, in order to the avoiding the evils we fear, and the attaining the good things we desire in this world.

"Neither let the mighty man glory in his might." By "might" most interpreters understand bodily strength or valour. And accordingly, the Chaldee paraphrast on my text brings the example of Solomon, the wisest of all men, falling from God's favour, to dissuade us from trusting in our own wisdom; the example of Samson, the strongest of men, to shew us the vanity of bodily strength; and the instance of Ahab, the richest of the kings of Israel, to deter us from confiding in our wealth and riches; of which also Solomon, king both of Judah and Israel, was a greater instance.

And yet methinks the might here spoken of may be extended farther, even to all that power and interest whatsoever which a man hath, or is able to make in this world. Let a man be never so mighty and powerful, either in his own strength and valour, or in his friends and dependents on him, or otherwise, yet he is a fool, if he presumptuously glories in this his might and power, as if it could be his security and protection without the favour of God. What is meant by the rich man and riches I need not tell you. But what is it for a man to glory either in his wisdom, or in his might, or in his riches? In the Hebrew it is לֹא-יִתְהַלַּל "let him not praise himself." Which the Seventy translate as we do, μὴ καυχᾶσθω, "let him not glory;" though elsewhere they themselves render the verb by the Greek ἀγαλλιᾶν, "greatly to rejoice." The word undoubtedly signifies any mighty complacence, delight, and satisfaction in a thing. But here by the context it is confined to such a delight and satisfaction in a thing, as is accompanied with a trust and confidence in it as our greatest felicity, safety, and security.

“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,” *i. e.* Let him not confide or depend on it, as that which will bear him out in the time of danger and distress; and so in the rest. “But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me.” Which words Grotius thus paraphraseth; “Let him trust on this, that he knoweth Me, to wit, so as to express this his knowledge of Me in his life and actions^b.”

“That I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth.” Where Grotius again observes, that it is not said that he knoweth Me according to My nature and essence; for so no man, in this life at least, can know God; but that he knoweth Me “which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness;” *i. e.* according to those properties and attributes whereby I have made Myself known to men in My word and works; such as loving-kindness and goodness, justice, and a perfect *ὁρθότης*, rectitude or righteousness, in all My dealings towards the sons of men. The same Grotius farther notes it as remarkable, that it is added “in the earth,” to meet with the vain and wicked conceit of those who held that God’s providence extends not to sublunary things, to things on earth, but is employed solely and wholly in the disposal of heavenly things above us; all things here below being left to the determination either of blind chance, or fatal necessity, arising from an inseparable chain of causes linked together in the first creation of things. In opposition to which impious imagination, God Himself by His Prophet assures us, that we are to know Him as a God that “exerciseth loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.” Which the divine Psalmist also more fully and distinctly expresseth^c; “Who is like unto the Lord our God, Who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth!”

The plain sense of the whole text in short is this: instead of glorying or trusting in our own wisdom, power, or wealth, as the men of the world use to do, we are to know, and assuredly to believe, that all the actions and concerns of men on earth are governed and disposed of by the providence of God; Whom

^b In eo fidat quod me noverit, nimirum si et hoc factis ostendat.

^c Psalm cxiii. 5, 6.

therefore we ought humbly to acknowledge, faithfully to serve and obey, and on Him stedfastly to trust and depend in the whole course of our lives, this being our best, and indeed only security. So that the Prophet delivers the same thing here, which Solomon doth^d; “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart—In all thy ways acknowledge Him—Fear the Lord, and depart from evil.”

The whole scope of the text thus explained, is comprised in these two observations.

I. It is a very sinful and vain thing for any man so to glory in his own wisdom, strength, or wealth, as to place his trust or confidence in either of them.

II. The religious acknowledgment of God’s providence in the wise and righteous government and disposal of all human affairs, joined with an humble dependence and firm trust on Him, in the way of obedience to Him, is man’s best, and indeed only security.

And first, It is a very vain and sinful thing for any man so to glory in his own wisdom, strength, or wealth, as to place his trust and confidence in either or all of them.

“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might,” &c. *i. e.* Let not any man so glory in either of these, as to confide and trust in them without a due regard to God’s providence in the government of things; for these severally and jointly are very weak and vain props for a man to build and rely upon. I shall pursue the proposition in its several parts.

(1.) “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom.” This indeed is the most natural pride of man. It was the contempt of that simple innocence, wherein God created our first parents, and their affectation of I know not what knowledge and wisdom beside and beyond it, that was their ruin in Paradise. And the sons of fallen man are generally apt to think that they possess indeed that wisdom which their first parents vainly coveted and aspired to.

Wisdom is the idol that sinful man chiefly adores and worships; with the mere shadow of this he is pleased, upon this especially he values himself, and the very conceit of this puffs

^d Prov. iii. 5—7.

him up with pride and self-confidence. He can more contentedly be stripped of all his other vain glories, than want the reputation of this.

Hence (as one well observes) though there have been some found, not only contented with, but even glorying in, the name of irreligious, yea, in being accounted Atheists, and wholly void of all religion; yet scarce any have been known willing to bear the character of foolish and unwise; and the reproach of knave in the corrupt world, is esteemed less ignominious than that of fool. And even of those who have some relish of virtue and goodness in them, how few are there, that either indeed do, or would be thought to do, any thing in favour thereof, which might in the least degree impeach the credit of their wisdom in the esteem of the foolish world! So fain would all be accounted, though very few in truth are, wise. The main reason of which seems to be this, that whereas the want of wisdom imports impotence and inability; irreligion and immorality are by election and free choice.

Now the pride of man, if God's grace correct it not, makes him more impatient of any want that argues him to be naturally weak and impotent, than of a moral defect proceeding from his own free election and choice of will. And hence it is, that many boast of things craftily done by them for some particular advantage, which they know to be evil and unlawful: thus glorying in their wit, whilst they are not at all ashamed of their wickedness. In a word, every man would be wise, and be thought so too, and most men think themselves really to be so, and those few mortals that are wise indeed, in comparison to the rest, if they have not the fear of God joined with their wisdom, are infallibly proud of it, and glory in it, and trust to their own counsels, without due regard to the Divine wisdom and providence, the only sure and safe guide amidst the infinite uncertainties and perplexities of human life.

Now how perfectly vain this glorying and trust of man in his own wisdom is, will appear (to omit many others) by these few following considerations.

1. Consider that the wisest of men many times most grossly mistake their measures, and, as if they were infatuated by some destiny, do the most foolish things. It is almost proverbial,

that there is nothing so foolishly said, but some wise man hath said the same: and it is as certain, that there is no action so foolishly done, but that the examples of wise men may be alleged to patronize the folly of it. Solomon, the wisest, not only of kings, but of all mere mortals, may yet be observed to have committed as gross incongruities, both in public government and private conversation, as any the most unadvised prince or man was ever guilty of.

2. Consider that wise men are apt, as to be confident of, so to be secure in their own wisdom, and to despise those that are beneath them in that faculty, as mere fools, and thereupon to grow careless, and to lay themselves open to those, who though they have less wit, yet have many times more vigilance; who watch, and often meet with, an opportunity of getting their advantage of them.

3. Consider how many secret lurking contingencies and chances there are in the course of human affairs, which no sagacity or wisdom of man can foresee or provide against, one of which suddenly happening, may utterly defeat and frustrate the best laid design and contrivance of the wisest man. And when such a chance happens, the wisest man is forced to speak in the language of the fool, *non putaram*. Experience tells us this, and it were easy to give you many notable instances of it out of history, if the time would permit.

4. Consider that every man's life lies at God's mercy and absolute disposal, Who can, and often doth, by a sudden death snap off the designing man, just as his design is growing to maturity, thereby dashing the whole frame of his plot and machination in pieces. This the divine Psalmist takes notice of in princes and great men^e; "Put not your trust in princes and great men, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

The designs and contrivances of great and wise men are altogether as uncertain as the breath they live by; that breath is on a sudden gone, and all their wisest counsels cease and perish with it. Man plots and designs, and says within himself, this and that, and the other great matter, he will do hereafter.

^e Psalm cxlvi. 3, 4.

But, behold! Divine Providence cuts him short, by cutting off his life on a sudden, and all his designs together with it.

5. And lastly, Consider that God professedly sets Himself to oppose the proud man that “glories in his own wisdom,” to baffle his wisdom, and to turn it into folly, to cross and frustrate his designs and contrivances, and to bring his counsels to nought. It is a sad sentence to these men, which St. James hath^f, and St. Peter in his first Epistle^g; “God resisteth,” sets Himself as it were in battle array, to fight with “the proud^h.” Indeed the proud man is an invader of the Divine glory, challenging that to himself which is God’s; and against invasion, force useth to be opposed. Now who can stand against the Divine force and power? what wisdom is able to countermine the Divine wisdom? How easily, and how many thousand ways, can the almighty and the all-wise God confound the greatest politician!

These considerations are sufficient to shew the great sin, vanity, and folly, of trusting to a man’s own wisdom, without regard to the providence of God in the government of things, and the necessity of following the Wise Man’s adviceⁱ; “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.” I proceed to the second part of the first observation.

(2.) “Let not the mighty man glory in his might.” Whether by that we understand might and strength of body, or a mighty interest in the world, or both. First, for bodily might and strength, men are generally apt to presume on it. The athletic man, he that enjoys a firm and robust constitution of body, seldom or never thinks of sickness, much less of death, as in any nearness of approach to him. He is upon the matter sure of a long life, and in this confidence (which is the greatest mischief) puts off and delays his repentance, giving himself up to vain and sinful pleasures and delights, and thinking it time enough many years hence to be serious and religious. This is a perfect vanity; for our own daily experience furnishes us with examples of the strongest men suddenly assaulted with

^f Chap. iv. 6.

^g Chap. v. 5.

^h Ὁ Θεὸς ὑπερηφάνους ἀντιτάσσεται.

ⁱ Prov. iii. 5—7.

weakness and sickness, and sinking under the burden of it into their graves, into dust and rottenness.

The man whom we see brisk and lively to-day, so that we admire, and perhaps envy his health, within a few days hence we may hear sad news of, that he is either sick, or dying, or dead; and from being the object of admiration and envy, become on a sudden the object of our pity, grief, and sorrow. And it is a common observation, that many valetudinarians, many sickly persons, that scarce ever in their lives knew what health was, have yet outlived and trod upon the graves of those who have enjoyed it in the greatest perfection. These very frequently, either by a fever suddenly kindled in their blood or spirits, or by a surfeit taken in confidence of their strength to bear strong drink, or to digest the greatest load of meat; or by a fall, or some surprising accident, posting to the gates of death; to which the other march by the slow and leisurely paces of a long and lingering infirmity. Indeed God Himself delights to shew His strength in man's weakness, and His strength against man's strength; to teach us that we should not depend in the former, nor depend and trust in the latter.

There are others that glory in their bodily strength, as their great and sure defence against their enemies; and indeed, in confidence of this, create enemies to themselves, braving and affronting all they meet with. But these persons generally at last meet with their match, yea, are overmatched: some of them fall as victims or beasts sacrificed to Bacchus, by a quarrel commenced in a drunken assembly: others die in the field, when they are neither drunk nor sober, by the sword of a private enemy, or perhaps a friend whom they would needs make their enemy, and are left there, as pitiful spectacles of grinning honour; and most of them come to an unfortunate and untimely end.

But if by might we understand a great and mighty interest and power in the world; to trust in this is every whit as vain as our confidence in the former. For how often doth Almighty God "shew strength with His arm; scattering the proud in the imagination of their hearts, and putting down the mighty from their seats!" as it is excellently expressed in the Magnificat, or song of the blessed Virgin^k. How many examples

^k Luke i. 51, 52.

doth history, yea, our own age and observation, supply us with, of great and mighty men meeting with as great falls, and falling into the greatest ruin! But I shall not insist on this, as being a subject not so fit for this congregation. Only I shall make bold to send all great and mighty men, that trust in their power and greatness, without a due dependence on Divine Providence, to take advice, and learn from a woman, but yet a woman divinely-inspired, and delivering the oracles of the great God; her name is Hannah, who¹, almost in the words of my text, thus bespeaks all the great men of the world: "Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girt with strength.—The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: He bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of His saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail." And so I pass to the third and last branch of my first observation.

(3.) "Let not the rich man glory in his riches," let him not trust in these. This indeed is the greatest prop that the carnal and worldly man is apt to rely on; this is the rock and fortress, the tower and castle, to which upon all occasions, and in the greatest exigencies, he hath recourse and flies to; and here, if any where, he promiseth himself safety.

The wise man thinks this the most necessary tool and instrument to work his designs by, and despairs of doing any great matters without it. The mighty and powerful man believes his chiefest strength and interest to lie in his wealth; a rich exchequer being accounted the surest support of the greatest monarch. And, in a word, among all ranks and degrees of men this is held for a maxim:

Quantum quisque sua, &c.

"The greater riches, the greater reputation and credit in the world."

¹ 1 Sam. ii. 3, 4, 7, 8, 9.

Hence the wisest of men, Solomon, tells us, that "money answers all things^m," *i. e.* it answers all the designs, desires, and necessities of men. This indeed is the saying of the wisest of men; but yet this saying is to be taken *cum grano salis*, "with a grain of wisdom;" the same, which the Wise Man gives us in the same bookⁿ; "Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun. For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that it giveth life to them that have it." Wisdom and wealth, a good soul and a good estate, are fitly matched together. For,

Haud facile emergunt, &c.

"The greatest virtues are oppressed by poverty."

Drusius on the text gives us a proverb of the Hebrews, "The law is good with the way of the earth^o." The law, that is, the study of the law, true piety, is good with the way of the earth, *i. e.* with some advantage that may afford a man a liberal and useful subsistence in this world. For the poor man cannot always, and in all circumstances, make use of his wisdom; or if he can use it, he wants authority: men generally regarding not what is spoken, but who speaks; and there being a great difference between the same saying or action, when spoken by a rich man in credit and reputation, and a poor despised person. But yet so excellent is true wisdom, that itself alone gives life to the owner of it; *i. e.* a comfortable life, a long life, (when Providence sees it good,) yea, life eternal. But an inheritance without wisdom is a sorry possession, and really a very poverty. Wealth separated from piety is a most vain thing, and it is the greatest folly to trust in it.

But perhaps the text may be otherwise interpreted, by understanding the wisdom spoken of in the first place, of secular or worldly wisdom: and the knowledge last mentioned, of the only true knowledge and wisdom, which the same Wise Man often tells us consists in the fear of God and sincere piety and religion, and then the words are to be thus paraphrased: "Wisdom is good with an inheritance; for wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence," &c. *i. e.* worldly wisdom and worldly wealth are

^m Eccles. x. 19.

ⁿ Eccles. vii. 11, 12.

^o Bona est lex cum via terræ.

seemingly a strong security and fence to the man that hath them both together. But indeed neither the one nor the other severally, nor both together united, are to be depended on; that wisdom and understanding, which consists in the fear of God, being man's chiefest, yea, only security and felicity; that alone, which gives him life, *i. e.* makes his life safe and comfortable here, and brings him perfect peace and happiness hereafter. This is a plain comment on my text: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me," &c. However this is certain, that wealth and riches are very vain things to be gloried and trusted in, as a man's chief security and felicity. For,

1. Riches reach only to the outward man, and cannot cure the inward evils and diseases of the mind. What doth all the wealth of the world signify to the man that is naturally and incurably melancholy, that dwells in a continual cloud, and looks on all the brighter things without him through a black glass and a thick mist of darkness? Besides, if some accidental discontent seize upon the rich man, (and the richest men are not out of the reach of such discontents,) how doth this sour all his enjoyments and delights, and render him inwardly most miserable, in the midst of all his outward happiness! How apt is every real or imaginary affront from his inferiors, that are either indeed so, or thought so by him, to disquiet and disturb him! How was Haman vexed in the midst of all his glory, for want only of a bow from Mordecai^p; Ahab, the richest of the kings of Israel, having taken a fancy to Naboth's vineyard, and being denied it, "was heavy and displeased," and took his bed upon it, and could not sleep, and would not eat^q. We are often infinitely mistaken, and take the falsest measures, when we envy the happiness of rich and great men; we know not the inward canker that eats out all their joy and delight, and makes them really much more miserable than ourselves.

But what if a troubled conscience assaults the rich man? And from this danger he is not free, nay to this he is, of all others, most subject. For riches are styled by our blessed Lord "the

^p Esth. iii. 5.^q 1 Kings xxi. 4.

mammon of unrighteousness^r." Because they are for the most part found in the hands of unrighteous men, and by them are most valued, as being the mammon they serve and honour more than God; and also because they are often gotten by unrighteous means, and generally used to unrighteous purposes, being made the instruments of sin, and ministers to luxury and wantonness. Now, I say, what if all the wickedness he is guilty of, in the getting or using of his wealth, happen to stare in the face of the rich man's conscience when awakened by sickness or any other affliction? How doth this affright him, and into what horrors doth it cast him!

2. Riches cannot cure all the evils and diseases of the body neither. One sharp fit of the gout, stone, or strangury, will overcome all the cordial power of gold and silver, and make a man despise his riches, and willing to part with his beloved money for that ease which the vilest beggar enjoys. But this will not always do; money may procure the physician, but oftentimes the physician cannot cure the disease; and the rich man is left to roar under his torment, or miserably to languish under his infirmity, whilst the poor man sings and rejoices in his ease and health. Besides, I take it for certain, that if not the poor, yet the meaner man hath great advantages in point of health above the rich. For that temperance and plainer fare and exercise of body to which the condition of his life necessitates the man of a lower fortune, is in truth the best physic, and that which, after a tedious and costly course, the physician himself oftentimes adviseth his rich patient to.

3. Riches are no security against outward accidents and contingencies. God hath placed man in this world, in the midst of many hazards and evil chances, which fall not under any certain rule, but that of Divine foresight and providence. To these the rich man is as liable as the poorest beggar. A tile or stone may as soon fall on and crush the rich man's head as the vilest peasant's; the rich man stands on no better legs, and hath no other arms, than the poor man; and he may, and as often doth, need the surgeon to cure his broken leg or arm. He that is clothed in purple, is thereby no more secured from a sudden blast of lightning than a man in rags. In the time of

^r Luke xvi. 9.

war and public calamity, the rich man generally fares the worst of all, and is exposed to plunder, rapine, and violence; whilst the meaner man is overlooked, and his obscurity is his greatest security and safety.

4. Riches are themselves uncertain, and therefore not to be gloried and trusted in. For what a folly is it for a man to be secure and confident in that, of the possession of which he can never be secure! Hence the great Apostle gives it as a proper advice to rich men, “not to trust in the uncertainty of riches,” or “in uncertain riches^s.” And of riches the wisest of men thus elegantly discourseth^t; “Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly as an eagle toward heaven.” Riches are as volatile a thing as the bird of the air, no where fixed, uncertain in the getting and keeping; flying from us both when we grasp after them and seek them, and when we think we have them in sure possession. Many are the projects of men to get riches, and some of them are so probable, so likely to take, and come so near the desired effect, that the man thinks himself as secure of them, as if he had them already in his power: but by some unexpected accident the project fails, and the man is left as poor as before; yea much poorer and more miserable, as being fallen from a great expectation, and afflicted with the loss of that, which though he never had, yet he was in his own conceit as sure of as if he had possessed it.

And when a man hath gotten wealth, how uncertain is the keeping of it! how often doth the bird fly away on a sudden! Riches are uncertain, as being subject to many chances, to theft and fraud, and rapine and violence, and fire and water too; a few great wrecks at sea often undoing the richest merchant. Besides, men generally seek after wealth, not so much for their own comfortable subsistence whilst they live, (for a little will suffice for that,) as for the raising of a family, and leaving a rich and flourishing posterity behind them when they are dead. But, alas! how vain is this design! Hear the royal Psalmist^u; “Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are

^s Μηδὲ ἠλπιέναι ἐπὶ πλούτου ἀδη-
λότητι, [1 Tim. vi. 17.]

^t Prov. xxiii. 4, 5.

^u Psalm xxxix. 6.

disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them." The provident man hath commonly a wasting prodigal, and the wise man a fool for his heir. And very often the heir utterly fails, and the family is extinct, and the name of it is perished from the earth, and the wealth gone to strangers that are no way related to the first gatherer of it.

But if the family be still in being, yet oftentimes the riches are fled, and the estate is gone. How many great estates may we reckon up, that have within the compass of one age shifted several families! A good many years ago such a lordship was in such a family, (and perhaps their escutcheon is still to be seen in the wall or windows of the mansion-house, as a sad monument of decayed and ruined gentility;) afterwards it went to another, and now it is in a third or fourth family; and whither it will go next, who can tell? so vain a thing is it for a man to promise himself that he shall convey his inheritance to his heirs for ever. It is an excellent admonition to this purpose, that David gives to those that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches^x; "For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish." The sense of which place seems to be this:

The rich man that trusteth in his riches, seeth, or may see, that the wise man and the fool certainly die, the one as well as the other; and that the wisest man, by all his wisdom, cannot so secure the estate he hath gotten, to his own progeny, but that it may, and often doth, in a short time, pass to another family. And yet such is the folly of the worldling, that he promises himself a perpetual name in the world, and a never-failing, and always flourishing posterity. But indeed, as the richest and most honourable man must himself certainly die, and have his own honour laid in the dust; so the honour of his house, family, and posterity, generally lasts not long, but is also in a little tract of time buried in oblivion.

^x Psalm xlix. 10—12.

5. And lastly, riches will certainly fail, leave, and forsake the owners of them at last, when they come to die.

If riches could for the present cure all the evils of our minds and bodies; if they could secure us against all outward accidents in this world; if we were sure of them for our lives, nay, and that they should continue to our posterity; yet were it a vain thing to trust in them as our security and happiness. For we ourselves must certainly, after a few years, bid an eternal farewell to them, and we must die and for ever leave them. This is the meditation of David in the above-mentioned Psalm^r; "Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him." Now what a contemptible, or rather pitiful object, is the rich man when he comes to die, if then he hath nothing else but his riches to trust in! Such an one dies with far greater regret and torment of mind, and is so much more miserable in his death than the poorest man. He is now for ever to leave all his wealth, together with all that pomp and grandeur, all those delights and pleasures that it afforded, and his body to be laid in the dark and silent grave; and as for his soul, (as little religion as he formerly had, yet,) he is now uncertain at least what will become of it; but he is certain, that if there be any place of misery for wicked souls, thither his must go. But, on the other side, the poor man hath no such temptation to make him fond of living or unwilling to die, but may rather look on death as a writ of ease, given him by Providence, from a life of sorrow and labour.

But see the stupidity and infatuation of fallen man! The rich man knows he must certainly die as well as others, and that the time of his death is altogether so uncertain, that, for ought he can tell, the next day or hour may be his last. He knows that whenever he dies he must infallibly leave his wealth behind him, and carry none of his riches along with him. And to us, that live under the revelation of the Gospel, God hath given so full a demonstration of a life to come, wherein they shall be for ever happy that despise this world, and they miserable that dote upon it; that it seems almost impossible for

^r Psalm xlix. 16, 17.

any rational man, that duly and impartially weighs the evidence given him, to doubt of it; and yet the rich man still depends on and glories in his riches. Whereas if he did but reflect on the perfect vanity of his actions in so doing, and seriously consider with himself how foolish and imprudent he therein is, he would heartily subscribe to the truth of the second observation I proposed to discourse of; viz. That the religious acknowledgment of God's providence, in the wise and righteous government and disposal of all human affairs, joined with an humble dependence and firm trust on Him, is man's best and indeed only security. But I shall reserve this subject to another opportunity.

Now to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be given and ascribed all honour and glory, all religious worship and adoration, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON XIX.

THAT THE RELIGIOUS ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE, IN THE WISE AND RIGHTEOUS GOVERNMENT AND DISPOSAL OF ALL HUMAN AFFAIRS, JOINED WITH AN HUMBLE DEPENDENCE AND FIRM TRUST ON HIM, IN THE WAY OF OBEDIENCE TO HIM, IS MAN'S BEST AND INDEED ONLY SECURITY.

Jer. ix. 23, 24.

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

IN my former discourse on this text I have stripped the carnal man of all his vain confidences, whether in his own wisdom, or in his might, or in his wealth, and have abundantly made good the first proposition contained in the text, viz. That it is a very sinful and vain thing for any man so to glory in his wisdom, might, or wealth, as to place his trust and confidence in either or all of them. But lest we should seem to discourse only in a destructive way, in taking off poor mortals from their false trusts, and then leave them in despair, and destitute of any other more sure and certain dependence; I proceed now to the second observation, which was this:

The religious acknowledgment of God's providence in the wise and righteous government and disposal of all human affairs, joined with an humble dependence and firm trust on Him, in the way of obedience to Him, is man's best, yea, only security.

"But let him that glorieth," &c. For the full clearing of which observation, I shall endeavour plainly to demonstrate these three things.

I. That there is a Divine Providence that takes notice of, and wisely and righteously directs and governs all human affairs, *i. e.* the actions and concerns of all men on earth.

II. That there is a most especial providence over good men, that orders all things for their good.

III. That therefore we ought, leaving all other earthly dependencies, to commit ourselves to the Divine Providence, in the way of piety, and sincere obedience to the Divine commands, and firmly to rely and trust on it, as our best, yea, only security. Of these in their order.

I. That there is a wise and righteous providence of God that takes cognizance of and governs the concerns of men on earth, is most plain, not only from the Holy Scriptures, but also from the universal consent even of those civilized heathen nations which know not, or own not, the sacred oracles as such.

1. First, The Holy Scriptures (the doctrine whereof will appear to him that diligently and impartially enquires into all the intrinsic and extrinsic arguments whereby it is confirmed, to be most certainly of God) in very many places clearly set forth the providence of God over the affairs of men. Hear some few, out of a great abundance that might be produced, most plain and express determinations of sacred writ concerning this matter. Such is that, Job xxxiv. 21; "For His eyes" (*i. e.* God's eyes) "are upon the ways of man, and He seeth all his goings." And that, Psalm xi. 4, 5; "The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: His eyes behold, and His eyelids try, the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence the Lord hateth." And Psalm xxxiii. 13—15; "The Lord looketh from heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike," (or as the Septuagint and the Latin render the Hebrew, "severally,") "He considereth all their works." And, Prov. v. 21; "The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He

pondereth all His goings." And lastly, Jer. xxxii. 17—19; "Lord God! behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee. Thou shewest loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the great, the mighty God, the Lord of Hosts, is His Name, great in counsel, and mighty in work: for Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."

This is the doctrine of the divinely-inspired writers; concerning whom it is farther observable, that they have in their very writings not only taught us the doctrine of providence, but also given us a full and demonstrative proof thereof in those many clear and exact predictions of future contingencies, which by the Divine Spirit they have delivered to the world many ages before the things themselves came to pass. Now prophecy is an irrefragable argument of providence; for if God foresees the actions of men before they are done, He cannot but see them in the doing; and those good or evil things, which beforehand He tells shall befall men, we may be sure when they happen are the effects of His providence.

2. To the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, concerning the providence of God, all the civilized heathen nations have given their suffrage, not only in word, but (which is more) in fact and practice. For though some conceited and contentious philosophers have ventured to dispute against Providence, yet they could never by all their sophistry so far prevail against the reason of mankind, and the force of primitive tradition, as to eradicate the settled belief of it. But the generality of men in every age and nation, not wholly degenerated into brutishness, have still practised upon a supposition of a Divine Providence overseeing and governing the concerns of men. Of which I shall give you two or three most plain and demonstrative instances.

First, The natural worship of God, consisting in prayer and supplication to Him, is and always hath been the practice of all nations not perfectly barbarous. For the truth of which affirmation, I appeal to the faith of all heathen historians and writers

that are at this day extant. Now what is prayer to God, to deliver us from danger, or to give us any blessing or good thing, but a direct acknowledgment of His providence over us? For to what purpose is it for any man to pray unto him, that either cannot or will not hear his prayers, or take any notice of his petitions, or grant what he desires? The divine Psalmist seems to me plainly enough to reflect on this^f; "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come:" where "all flesh" is an expression so wide and comprehensive, as that it must at least signify the generality of mankind. Nor is it any wonder that God should be set forth by the Psalmist, even to the heathens, as a God that heareth prayer. For we all well know, that there is a providence of God over the heathens, which administers at least temporal good things to them without their prayers, and therefore may much more do so upon their prayers and supplications, though misguided, and not well directed. We know that the mariners in the ship with Jonah, (though otherwise as seamen and heathens too they might have been thought not very inclinable to religion, yet,) when they apprehended the danger of shipwreck, had recourse every man to his God by prayer^g; and we know that the supreme and only true God heard their prayers, as proceeding from some honest principles of natural religion in them.

Secondly, The instituted worship of God, (for so I shall presume to call it,) consisting in sacrifices, hath been as universal a practice in all ages and nations as the former, and was indeed always joined with it. It were not very difficult (if it were our present business) to shew how from this practice, as taught our first parents after their fall, and from them derived to all mankind descending from them, some of the main doctrines of the Gospel itself may be deduced. But however this is certain, that the doctrine of providence is so legible in the custom of sacrificing, that he who runs may read it. For sacrifices unto God among the heathens, and among all nations that used them, were either for the averting of evils that might come from Him, or removing of evils already inflicted by Him, as punishments of sin; or to procure those good things from Him which they wanted, or to return thanks to Him for good things already

^f Psalm lxy. 2.^g Jonah i. 5.

received; and so were all of them plain acknowledgments of Divine Providence.

Thirdly and lastly, The custom of deciding doubtful matters by oaths hath been and is likewise received and practised among all nations that had or have any sense of God left in them. This as well as the former is so notorious, that I need not spend my time in the proof of it. Now what are oaths but downright appeals to the providence of God, whereby we acknowledge His omniscience, and that He knows the truth of all things; and His power and justice, that He can and will punish the authors of falsehood, and protect the lovers of truth? So firm a possession hath the belief of Providence always kept in the world.

Let us consider now those objections which some bold and self-opiniated men have brought against it. To omit here the trite and common objection of the present prosperity of some wicked men, and the adversity of some good men, (a full solution whereof you have in the seventy-third Psalm throughout,) the chief cavils of the Epicureans are these two:

Object. 1. That it is inconceivable how God can at the same moment of time see and take notice of all the actions of all men on earth, especially their inward actions, the thoughts and secrets of their hearts.

Object. 2. That it seems beneath the Majesty of God to regard or concern Himself about so low and vile a thing as man is.

Before I distinctly answer these pretences, I shall in general observe this, that they are directly opposite each to the other. For the former objection supposes God too little to see and govern all the actions and concerns of men; the other makes Him so great and so high, that He disdains to concern Himself about them. In the former, the infidel pleads against Divine Providence, that *non potest*, "it cannot" take notice of all things on earth: in the latter, he objects, *non vacat exiguis*, &c. "That God will not concern Himself about the little affairs of men, as being unworthy of His cares and regard."

In a word, the first objection sets the work of providence in the government of this world above God: the second placeth it beneath Him. Thus error always contradicts, not only the truth, but itself. But let us now encounter these objections severally.

As for the first, that it is inconceivable how all the actions, yea, the most inward thoughts of all men can in the same moment of time be seen and taken notice of by God; it is an objection so foolish, that any rational man may well be ashamed of it. It was as wisely as wittily said of one, "That if the brutes were capable of a design to draw the picture of God, they would paint Him just like one of themselves." So these brutish men cannot, or rather will not, think of God, the infinite Almighty God, under any other notion than what is adequate to their own, not only finite, but feeble and weak measures. Thou canst not conceive how God doth see and govern all things in this world; doth it therefore follow He cannot or doth not so do? a ridiculous consequence. The beasts do not, cannot conceive how we men make ships, and tame the unruly ocean; how and by what maxims of policy we frame and govern kingdoms and commonwealths; how we measure the courses of the stars, and take observations of the heavenly bodies; much less how we discourse of religion and divine matters; and yet we are sure we can do, and actually do all these things. Now it is certain, that we mortal men are infinitely far inferior to the supreme God than the beasts are to us. But let us see whether these great pretenders to reason may not be convinced of their folly even by sense itself.

Thou that questionest the possibility of God's inspection of all things here below, look up and behold that glorious luminary of heaven, the sun; see how in the same moment it diffuseth its light and heat into all the several parts and corners of the wide earth exposed to it, and peeps through every crevice of every the most secret place thereof. Now how canst thou see this wonderfully diffusive influence of a created light, and not grant a far more extensive efficacy to the great Creator, the Father of lights? But to come nearer to thee, consider the very powers and faculties that God hath given thee, and then thou canst never doubt of the Divine power and providence over thee. Do but open thine eyes, and thou canst in a moment see to the starry heaven, though at a very vast distance from thee: now He that made thee see from earth to heaven, cannot He Himself much more see from the highest heaven to this earth? And if thou questionest how God can know thine heart and secret thoughts,

I ask thee how thou thyself comest to know them? Didst thou not receive the very faculty of knowing that, and all other things that are knowable by thee, from God? And could He make thee to know that, which He Himself cannot know? This is the very reasoning of the divine Psalmist, Psalm xciv., where^g he brings in wicked and profane men thus slighting Divine Providence; "Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it:" and then he excellently refutes them^h; "Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not He correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not He know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity." The foundation of which excellent argumentation is this; whatever perfection there is in created things, it is from God the Creator, and therefore in Him it must needs be in an eminent manner. Much after the same way the Apostle St. John discoursesⁱ; "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." If a man be conscious to himself of his own wickedness, yea, the very secret wickedness and hypocrisy of his heart; sure God Himself who set up this "candle" of conscience, (as Solomon calls it^k,) in every man, cannot be ignorant of it; He being the fountain of knowledge, and all knowledge in the creature derivative from Him, and so knowing all things that are knowable by any creature, and infinitely more. But I have perhaps spent too much time in answering a foolish objection.

I therefore proceed to refute the other cavil against Divine Providence, that pretends it to be beneath the Majesty of God to take notice of the mean and vile concerns of men on earth. The former objection assaulted the omniscience of God, this strikes at His goodness; and therefore though it be more specious, is yet really every whit as impious as the other. Now here it is to be confessed, that we men on earth, yea, the most glorious creatures of heaven, the angels, are infinitely beneath the Majesty of God, the Creator of all things. But yet we

^g Ver. 7.^h Ver. 8—11.ⁱ 1 John iii. 20.^k Prov. xx. 27.

say also, that whatsoever the infinite Majesty of God was pleased at first to create and make, and in any degree to communicate His goodness unto, cannot be thought unworthy of His after care and providence; yea, by and from its first creation, it is in a manner entitled to the future providence of God that created it. It was the goodness of God, being self-sufficient, and from eternal ages perfectly happy in Himself, that moved Him in that point of duration which His infinite wisdom saw most fitting, as it were to go forth and down from Himself, and to give being to very many things, and to communicate His goodness to each of them in such degrees as the same His infinite wisdom was pleased to assign; and from the same goodness, whereby He created things, He still preserves them, provides for them, and takes care of them.

The work of creation and providence are both equally a *συγκατάβασις*, (as some of the ancient Fathers term it,) a “condescension” in God, and of this gracious condescension the sacred writers take special notice. So the divine Psalmist¹, “The Lord is high above all nations, and His glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the Lord our God, Who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth!” As if he had said, The Majesty of God is not only above all the nations of the earth, but His glory is also above the heavens and all the excellent powers and inhabitants thereof; and yet such is His unparalleled goodness and condescension, that He humbleth Himself to behold and take notice of the transactions both in heaven and earth. This is the plain sense of that text; and the hyperbaton, which our learned English paraphrast suggests, is manifestly forced and violent, as he himself at last doth little less than confess. So that if we look to the infinite Majesty of God, without respect to His goodness, the heavenly affairs are as well beneath His care and providence as the concerns of men on earth. But yet such is the goodness of God, that He certainly takes care of both.

And as to the condescension of God in His special care of man, the same divinely-inspired writer excellently discourses of it^m; “When I consider the heavens, the work of Thy fingers;

¹ Psalm cxiii. 4—6.

^m Psalm viii, 3, 4.

the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" *i. e.* When I view the heavens, and contemplate that stupendous work of Thine, and therein behold Thy supereminent glory and majesty, I cannot but be amazed to think that Thou, so great a God, shouldst take such care of so mean and vile a thing as man is. The Psalmist questions not God's special regard to the sons of men, but wonders at His goodness and gracious condescension therein. Question it, I say, he doth not; for he presently observes a plain demonstration of it in the very constitution and frame of nature; whereby it is so ordered, that man hath an universal dominion given him over this whole lower worldⁿ; "For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts" (*i. e.* the wild beasts) "of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea." Thus I have despatched my first particular, viz. That there is a wise and righteous providence of God that takes cognizance of and governs the concerns of men on earth.

II. I proceed hence to the second head of discourse which I have proposed to myself; viz. That there is a most especial providence of God over good men, that orders all things for their good.

The providence of God is indeed over all things on earth, but not over all things alike. God takes care of the very brute creatures; the Psalmist telling us, that "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry," being as soon as they are hatched left destitute and forsaken by the old ones^o. But God's regard to man is such, that in comparison thereof the holy text seems to deny that He hath any regard to beasts. "Doth God take care for oxen?" saith the Apostle^p. Yes, He doth; but He hath a far greater regard to men; and therefore that law, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn," teacheth us not

ⁿ Ver. 5—8.

^p 1 Cor. ix. 9.

^o Psalm cxlvii. 9.

only that we should do right to our labouring beasts; but also and much more that we should not defraud such men as by their labours, especially in the work of the Gospel, deserve well at our hands of their due reward, which is the reasoning of the Apostle in that place. Hence it is that the very lives of the brutes are permitted by Providence, yea given by the Divine law, to the use and service of man; and he is allowed to take and kill, not only the beasts of the earth, but the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, to furnish out a plentiful table for himself.

Among men there is a most especial providence of God over those that are His children, that imitate His goodness, and walk in the paths of virtue and righteousness. The divine Apostle tells us, "That the living God is" *Σωτήρ*, "the Saviour" or Preserver "of all men, but especially of those that believe^q."

Wonderful are the expressions in Scripture of God's tender care and kindness towards good men. Our Saviour tells us, that the very "hairs of their head are numbered^r;" where the speech is proverbial. We use to number and take account of things we value; and, on the other side, those things we esteem and regard not, we are said to make no account or reckoning of them. An hair signifies the very least thing, and the loss of an hair the least damage. So that the sense is, the very least concerns of good men are regarded by God, nor will He suffer them to sustain the least detriment in the way of piety and righteousness, which shall not tend to their greater good. God is said to be as tender of His people, as a man is "of the apple" or pupil "of his eye," of which we know every man is very careful, that it receive not the least hurt^s. And David prays to God for His especial providence over himself in the very same phrase^t; "Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, O Thou that savest by Thy right hand them which put their trust in Thee from those that rise up against them: keep me as the apple of the eye," &c.; *i. e.* (saith the English paraphrast,) "Let Thy watchful and tender providence fence and secure me from all dangers, after the same manner as nature hath provided eyebrows and lids, and five tunicles for guards to

^q 1 Tim. iv. 10.

^r Matt. x. 30.

^s Deut. xxxii. 10.

^t Psalm xvii. 7, 8.

fence and preserve the black (the most tender part) in the middle of the eye, that wherein the visive faculty is placed."

And indeed, abundant is the provision that God hath made for the defence and security of His faithful ones. The holy angels themselves are commanded to leave the heavenly blissful habitations, and to hover over this earth for their protection and preservation. For they are styled by the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews^a, "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation:" and the Psalmist tells us, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them^x." Upon which it presently follows^y, "O taste and see that the Lord is good! blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Yea, our Lord Himself assures us, that His "little ones," those that imitate the innocence and humility of little children, "have their angels in heaven^z." Hence the holy angels are termed "the eyes of the Lord," as being the instruments of His watchful providence over good men. So^a, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself" (it should be "themselves") "strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him." Where that by "the eyes of the Lord" are meant angels of God, is plain enough from the words themselves, which clearly express the very employment of the holy angels in being sent, and running to and fro through the earth, for the protection and security of good and upright men, and which indeed can hardly be made sense without admitting that interpretation.

And the same is farther evident from other parallel texts of Scripture; in the fourth chapter of the prophecy of Zechariah^b, we have a vision of seven lamps in a golden candlestick; the interpretation of which vision is thus given^c; "Those seven, they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro throughout the whole earth." Now what those "seven eyes of the Lord" are, we learn from St. John, Rev. v. 6, where we have a vision of the Lamb, "having seven horns and seven eyes," which are the seven

^a Chap. i. 14.

^x Psalm xxxiv. 7.

^y Ver. 8.

^z Matt. xviii. 10.

^a 2 Chron. xvi. 9.

^b Ver. 2.

^c Ver. 10.

spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth. And those spirits he terms “angels^e,” “I saw the seven angels which stood before God.” So again^f, we read of “seven spirits” which are before God’s throne, *i. e.* wait in His presence; do not sit upon, but stand before His throne, ready to receive His commands; and are therefore undoubtedly created spirits. For the understanding of which places we are to know, that the ancient Jews believed that among the holy angels, those eyes of God and instruments of His watchful providence over us, there are seven principal ones, as it were chief captains and commanders of the heavenly host. So in the ancient though apocryphal book of Tobit^g, the angel Raphael is brought in thus speaking to Tobit and his son; “I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels—which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.” And that this was no vain speculation of the Jews, appears from those texts of canonical Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, which we have but now alleged. But this by the way. I proceed.

By this ministry of His holy angels, God preserves the faithful, His children, from infinite unseen dangers, especially from their ghostly enemies, and directs them in all their ways, and blesses and gives good success (oftentimes strangely and unexpectedly) to their honest undertaking. And of this I have given several instances, in my discourse of the office of the holy angels, in reference to good men^h, &c. which I shall not now repeat.

Now what a wonderful condescension of the Divine goodness is this, that the glorious courtiers of heaven, the intimate servants of the Supreme King and Lord of the world, should thus attend upon us vile clods of earth! And how safe and happy must the good man needs be under the conduct of these wise, good, and powerful guardians! How easily can they, how readily will they, upon the command of our heavenly Father, preserve us from dangers, supply our wants, direct our courses, and give a prosperous issue to all our affairs. In a word, whether we look on the providence of God over the faithful in the Fountain or in the streams, in the first Mover or in the

^e Chap. viii. 2.

^f Rev. i. 4.

^g Chap. xii. 15.

^h P. 215. of this volume.

inferior wheels, in the principal Cause or in the instruments; it appears every way an abundant provision for and security to them.

For a concluding proof whereof I shall only add that illustrious text, Psalm lxxxiv. 11; "The Lord God is a Sun and Shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Divine Providence is not only a Shield over the truly virtuous, to secure them from dangers, but a Sun also continually shining on their heads, and sending forth upon them the comfortable beams and influences of His grace and favour. He not only removes evils from them, but supplies them with all good things that are indeed good for them. If they are fit for a wealthy prosperous condition, they shall have it, and that with God's blessing. But if a meaner condition be more convenient for them, they shall be made happy therein. If at any time afflictions be needful, (as they are often as necessary for our souls as physic is for our bodies,) they shall taste of the goodness of their heavenly Father even in them; they shall be supported under them, and made better by them, and in God's due time delivered from them. If God tries them, He will assist them in the trial, and crown them after it. And, in a word, Divine Providence will so order all the occurrences of the good man's life in this world, as shall best conduce to his eternal happiness in the other; which is indeed the only main chance and great concern that we ought always, and above all things, to mind and think of.

III. And this brings me to the third and last stage of my discourse, That therefore we ought, leaving all other earthly dependencies, to commit ourselves to the Divine Providence, in the way of piety and sincere obedience to the Divine commands, and firmly to rely and trust on it as our best, yea only security. Which being so plain a consequence from what hath been already delivered, I shall be brief in the handling of it, and so conclude.

Trust and dependence on the Divine Providence is every where in Scripture recommended as our great duty and only security; so that we can scarce open our Bibles but we meet with something that minds us of it. But of so great an abundance which might be produced, I shall select only two or three

texts, that most plainly serve for this purpose. Hear the Psalmist^k; "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Hear him again^l; "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desire of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass." Where, upon our trust in God, it is promised that God will give us even the desire of our hearts, *i. e.* if not the particular, yet the general desire of our hearts. For we all desire in general that which is good, though we too often err in the particular choice, taking that for good which is indeed hurtful for us. Now if God deny that particular thing which we think to be good for us, but is not, and gives us that which He Himself knows to be indeed good for us, He deals with us as becomes a wise and gracious Father, and thus He always deals with them that trust and depend on Him. It is a shame for us Christians to be ignorant of this, when the heathen poet could say,

——— Si consilium vis,
Permites ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris.
Nam pro jueundis, aptissima quæque dabunt dii.
Charior est illis homo quam sibi.

i. e. "Our best way is to leave it to the gods (so he speaks in compliance with the custom of his countrymen) to judge and determine what is useful and convenient for us. For they will certainly give us, instead of those things that most please us, those things that are fittest for us. For they have a greater care of man than he hath of himself."

But as to our duty of trusting in God, full is the expression of Solomon in the text we have more than once mentioned^m; "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." Every man almost pretends to trust in God; but few trust on Him in truth, and with the whole heart. Whereof this is a plain demonstration: no man heartily trusts in God, but he that doth every day commit himself and all his concerns in general to the

^k Psalm lv. 22.

^m Prov. iii 5.

^l Psalm xxxvii. 3—5.

Divine Providence by serious prayer, and in every particular occurrence and business of moment makes his particular address to God, by humble supplication, for His direction and blessing. Now how very few are there, of those that pretend to trust in God, that do thus.

And after all, we are still to remember the proviso already given, that our dependence on God's providence must be accompanied with a sincere obedience to His commands. Hence the Psalmist joins both together in the above alleged textⁿ; "Trust in the Lord, and do good." And Solomon, in the text last mentioned^o, after he had said^p, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart," presently subjoins^q, "Fear the Lord, and depart from evil." Our hope in God is presumption, without due regard to His laws, and an uniform obedience to His commands. And to convince us of the perfect vanity of such presumption, let us but attentively consider, what that providence of God is that we pretend to trust in. That special providence of God, which is man's only security, (as we have above described it,) is nothing less than His special love and kindness to man, whereby He hath a tender regard to all his concerns, and, as a signal expression thereof, sends His holy angels, those most glorious spirits, to pitch their tents round about him, and to take a singular care and tuition of him in all his ways.

Now what an intolerable impudence is it in any wicked man to depend on such a providence of God over him? With what face canst thou expect God's special care and regard of thy concerns, that hast so little or no regard of His commands? Can the adulterer, the drunkard, the liar, the slanderer, the backbiter, the common swearer, the cheat, the unjust man, the covetous and worldly man, the spiteful and malicious man, or any man that continues in any wilful transgression of any known law of God, be a darling of Divine Providence? Will the angels, the holy angels of God, those faithful Ministers of His, attend on and do good offices for such as refuse to serve their great Lord and Master, yea, live in downright rebellion against His government? Can the glorious host of heaven wait on the vassals of hell? This cannot be.

ⁿ Psalm xxxvii. 3.^o Prov. iii.^p Ver. 5.^q Ver. 7.

Indeed who can be worthy of that providence of God which we have set forth? No man by a worthiness of merit. But yet there is a worthiness of meetness, fitness, and due disposition required in all that expect to be favourites of the Almighty, and objects of His more especial care and providence. And this worthiness consists in a firm belief of the special providence of God over good men, in a sincere and hearty endeavour to obey God in all things, *i. e.* to become ourselves good men, that we may be entitled to such His providence over us, and then in an entire trust and dependence on it.

Wherefore (to conclude) let us all in good earnest make it our great business to serve God, to study to know His will, and to do it when we know it, and then we are safe. Whosoever thou art that hearest me this day, be persuaded presently to forsake thy sinful courses, and entirely to resign up thyself to the Divine government, and then be secure of the Divine protection and special providence over thee. Then let loose the reins of thy hope and confidence in God, and trust in His gracious providence as much as thou canst, and thou shalt never be confounded. God shall lead thee by a most gracious economy through this vale of tears the whole course of thy pilgrimage in this world; directing thee in all difficulties, comforting thee in all sorrows and distresses, blessing all earthly enjoyments that He gives thee, and supplying the want of those that He thinks fit to deny thee with greater blessings; and in the life to come He shall pour out the full riches of His grace and goodness on thee.

For which blessed life God of His infinite mercy fit us, and thercinto in His due time admit us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

To Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, might, majesty, and dominion, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON XX.

THAT IT IS MATTER OF GREAT USE AND CONCERNMENT, MUCH CON-
DUCING TO THE PURPOSES OF RELIGION, SERIOUSLY TO CONSIDER
THE SHORTNESS AND UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE; AND THAT SUCH
DUE CONSIDERATION OF OUR SHORT AND UNCERTAIN ABODE IN
THIS WORLD IS THE GIFT OF GOD, AND THE EFFECT OF HIS GRACE,
WHICH THEREFORE OUGHT TO BE SOUGHT FOR BY HUMBLE AND
EARNEST PRAYFR.

Psalm xxxix. 4.

*Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days,
what it is; that I may know how frail I am.*

THIS thirty-ninth Psalm, composed on the same occasion as
the thirty-seventh, namely, on the scandal that David took
at the prosperity of wicked men whilst he was himself in misery,
hath also a mixture of contemplation upon the vanity of all
worldly things. The particular calamity that prompted David to
this useful contemplation is not by interpreters fully agreed on.

Many think that it was some sickness that David was at this
time afflicted with. Others are of the opinion, that his trouble
from Absalom was the particular occasion of the Psalm.

But for myself, I incline to the first opinion, which I am
confirmed in by the eleventh verse, where David describes the
beauty of man as consuming away like a moth at God's rebuke
and correction; and by the 13th and last verse, where he prays
“that God would spare him, that he might recover strength,
before he should go hence, and be no more.”

On which words a learned interpreter thus paraphrases^a,
“Withhold Thy scourge from me a little while, that I may

^a Abstine paululum a flagellando me, migrare cogar, nunquam huc reversu-
ut vires pristinas recipiam, priusquam rus.

recover my former strength, or health, before I am forced to depart out of this world never more to return hither again."

This Psalm is, by the wisdom of our Church, appointed to be used in the Office for the Burial of the Dead, as being almost wholly spent on the theme of the shortness and vanity of this our mortal life on earth; and is indeed a rich repository or common-place of fit texts for funeral sermons.

As for the words which I have now chosen for the subject of my present discourse, they are evidently a devout prayer of David, relating to his death and departure out of this world. But it is questioned what the thing distinctly is for which David prays in these words, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days."

Some have thought that he prays for a special revelation from God of the time of his death, taken either precisely or with some latitude, how long he should live, when he should die, and be called out of this world. Indeed this is a favour which it hath pleased God to grant unto some men. Thus Moses and Aaron, some time before their death, had notice given them of it, and of the place where they should lay themselves down and die, the one on Mount Hor, the other on Mount Nebo^b; Thus Hezekiah had warning given him by the Prophet Isaiah, to make his last will and testament, and to set his house in order, and prepare for his approaching death^c. And when God was pleased, upon his earnest prayer and humble supplication, to reprieve him from that death, under which, according to the course of nature, he must necessarily have fallen, and extraordinarily to add some more years unto his life, he had this second favour from God, to know by the same Prophet the precise number of years so added, viz. fifteen years, no more nor no less^d. Thus Elijah had a revelation from God beforehand of his translation from this earth to heaven, as we read 2 Kings ii. And in the New Testament we find St. Peter was informed by our Lord Jesus of His approaching death and martyrdom^e; "I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remem-

^b Deut. xxxii. 49, 50.

^c Isai. xxxviii. 1.

^d Ver. 5.

^e 2 Pet. i. 13, 14.

brance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me."

In ecclesiastical history, in the acts of Polyearp, recited by Eusebius in the fourth book of his History^f, we read that the blessed Bishop and Martyr, some days before his death, dreamt, that the pillow on which he lay was first all in a flame about him, and then burnt to ashes; and thereupon awaking, he told the brethren that he was sure he should very shortly be burnt at the stake for the confession of the Christian faith; which accordingly came to pass. Nor do we want some certain instances in our own age, of persons so instructed by their guardian angel, or by some other means, as that they have been able, when in perfect health, punctually to foretel the day of their death.

But these are extraordinary cases. The prescience or foreknowledge of the day or time of our death is a thing for the most part unfit for us to ask of God, or for Him to grant unto us; and therefore ordinarily the all-wise and good God reserves it as a secret unto Himself. If men generally knew the day of their death, the *ὠκύμοροι*, they of shorter lives would spend their few days in grief and sorrow, and be continually vexed to see their lives circumscribed within so narrow limits, and be sluggish to all noble and generous actions that require time and labour. On the other side, they that knew they had many years yet to live, would be apt to procrastinate their repentance, and from that delay to take occasion of licentiousness. Our last day is therefore in mercy ordinarily hid from us, to the end that we should every day and continually prepare for it. Nor would men be careful to use the due means for the preservation of their health and life, if they knew *terminum vitæ fatalem*, "the fatal period of it."

This therefore I am persuaded is not the thing that David here prays for. What then, you will say, doth he pray for? I answer, He prays that God would make him to know in general how short and uncertain man's life here on earth is, that every man must certainly die, after a determinate and short number of years expired, being in the mean while uncertain and ignorant of that fatal period.

^f Chap. 15.

But, you will say again, doth not every man know as much as this? Yes; but very few consider it. When therefore David prays, that God would “make” him “to know his end, and the measure of” his “days,” we are to call to mind the known rule of Divines: “In Scripture, words of knowledge betoken suitable affections^g.” For a man therefore to “know” his “end, and the measure of” his “days, what it is,” or to know how short and uncertain his life is on earth, is for him seriously to consider and lay to heart that great truth, and to live accordingly. This is not what every man doth, though every man ought to do it. In short, therefore, David here in my text, prays for the very same thing that Moses doth in his prayer^h; “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom,” *i. e.* By Thy grace enable us to make a just account of the shortness and uncertainty of our life on earth, that so we may wisely apply ourselves to make the best use we can of it, in repenting of our sins, and fitting ourselves for the final absolution. David’s “measuring” of his days is doubtless the same with Moses’s “numbering” his days.

The text being thus I hope sufficiently explained, I proceed to raise my observations from it, which shall be these two.

I. I observe, it is a matter of great use and concernment, much conducing to the purposes of religion, for a man to know his end, and the measure of his days, *i. e.* seriously to consider the shortness and uncertainty of his life here on earth. For you see David in my text makes this the matter of his serious prayer and humble supplication to Almighty God.

II. I observe, a due consideration of the shortness and uncertainty of man’s life in this world is the gift of God, and the effect of His grace, which therefore we ought by prayer humbly and earnestly to ask of Him. So David doth in my text, “Lord, make me to know mine end,” &c.

I. I begin with the first observation, viz. this, It is a matter of great use and concernment, much conducing to the purposes of religion, for a man to know his end, and the measure of his days, *i. e.* seriously to consider the shortness and uncertainty of his life here on earth.

^g In Scripturis, verba scientiæ connotant affectus.

^h Psalm xc. 12.

This will appear by shewing you more particularly what it is for a man to know his end, and the measure of his days, or to number his days aright. The very explanation of the nature of this duty will of itself shew the great use and benefit of it.

For a man then to know the measure of his days, or to number his days aright, is,

1. To understand and consider the shortness and uncertainty of our life in this world, taken absolutely and in itself. The royal Prophet excellently expresses this in the verse immediately following my text, "Behold, Thou hast made my days as an handbreadth." An elegant metaphor, to set forth the brevity of man's life on earth. It is a very narrow scantling, as it were but an handful of time and duration. Many of the sons of Adam find their grave in their mothers' womb, and die before they see the sun. Others peep forth into the light, as it were only to see it; and having by a shriek or two given testimony to the misery of this life, presently die and vanish, and their death treads upon the heels of their birth. Others are *ήμερόβιοι*, "creatures of a day's continuance," and their birth and death are contained within the compass of one rising and setting of the sun. Others live a little longer, but yet die upon their mothers' breast. Others outlive their infancy, and having prattled and played a while in the world, death on a sudden surprises them, and puts an end to their childish sport. Others arrive to some growth of stature and understanding, and bud forth and promise fair, and are the joy and hope of their parents; but on a sudden (like the child of the Shunamitish woman) the sprightly lad falls sick and dies, and leaves the afflicted parents' gray hairs to follow with sorrow to the grave. Others live to blossom, and arrive to the flower of their age, their youth, but a fever or some violent accident snatches them away; the flower on a sudden fades and withers, and they die in the prime of their years. Others reach the middle age, and their mountain appears strong, and the tree seems to have taken deep root, and there is little doubt but the man will live to a good old age. But, behold! death lays his axe to the root of the tree, the firm oak is cut down, falls, and dies, and the strong man "is taken away in the midst of his days," as David expresseth it¹. But if the

¹ Psalm cii. 24.

days of our years are seventy, nay, "if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we flee away," as Moses expresseth it^k. Threescore or fourscore years make a great noise, and sound high, and whilst they are before us, they look big, and seem to be a long time of duration. But one year steals away after another, and when the whole term is out, we wonder and are vexed at our false arithmetic; the vast number of years seems as a cipher, and the time that is past appears as a dream, yea, a mere nothing.

2. To know the measure of our days, or to number our days aright, is to consider the shortness of our life on earth comparatively; and that compared, 1. with God's eternity; 2. compared with our own eternity; 3. compared with the great work and business of our life, the business of religion.

1. To know the measure of our days, is to consider the shortness of this mortal life compared with God's eternity. This is a very humbling and abasing consideration, not only to us mortal men, but even to the angels themselves. And therefore David takes special notice of it in the verse next my text, in these words, "And mine age is as nothing before Thee," *i. e.* in comparison of Thy eternal duration. So Moses^l; "A thousand years are but as yesterday in Thy sight." Our age is but an handbreadth in itself; but, compared to eternity, it is not an hair's breadth, yea, it is nothing, it bears no proportion.

ETERNITY! O word of a vast comprehension! how doth this world, and the duration of all things therein, vanish and disappear at the very naming of thee! It is impossible to use exact propriety of speech in discoursing of this matter; and therefore we must express ourselves as well as we can. Before we were, there was an infinite space of time, which no finite understanding can reach; and when we die, and shall be no more in this world, an endless eternity of time (if I may so speak) succeeds and follows, in which infinite duration our poor life on earth intervenes, or comes in as an handbreadth, the space of a few minutes, as a small isthmus, or creek of land, between two boundless oceans. In short, our life in this world is but a little point of time, interposed between an eternity past

^k Psalm xc. 10.

^l Psalm xc. 1.

and an eternity to come. We may quickly lose ourselves and be swallowed up in this profound consideration; and therefore I pass from it to the next, viz.

2. To number our days aright, is to consider the shortness of our life here, compared with our own eternity hereafter. God is eternal *a parte ante*, and *a parte post*, “by an eternity past,” (you must still bear with impropriety of speech in this matter,) and “by an eternity to come.” There was never any point of time wherein He was not; there shall never be any point of time wherein He shall cease to be. And therefore He is styled in Scripture “Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come^m.” But as for ourselves, there was a time when we were not. Our register-books will tell us when we began to be and to live. Nay, this world, and all things therein, had a beginning, and there was once nothing in existence besides the Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the blessed Trinity in Unity, which from all eternity enjoyed itself, as being self-sufficient and perfectly happy in itself, nor at all needing any thing without itself, any created being to add to its felicity. For God made not this world for any essential good that should thereby accrue unto Himself; (for all things owe all that they are or have unto Him;) but with a design to communicate His goodness to certain beings without Himself, which should therefore depend upon Him, and adore and glorify Him, as the Author and Fountain both of their being and well-being.

Upon this design, in that point of time (if I may have leave so to call it) which the all-wise God saw most fit and convenient, the eternal Word and Son of God went forth from the Father, by His almighty power to create and make heaven and earth, and all things that are therein. For so we read; “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was madeⁿ.” Of things that God made, some He made only for a temporary use, and to serve the economy or dispensation of this present world, as

^m Rev. i. 8.

ⁿ John i. 1—3.

St. Irenæus somewhere expresses it. In this rank are all the beasts that perish, all trees, plants, and vegetables, nay, the earth itself and the heavens as now they are. For all these shall be dissolved, and were made to be dissolved, as the Psalmist assures us°. “Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed.” But there are other creatures designed for an eternal duration, as the angels, and we men, in that part of us wherein we are allied to the angels, our souls; which, when our bodies die, still live, till by the power of Christ our bodies also shall be raised again, and reunited to our souls; and then in both we shall become *ισάγγελοι*, “equal to the angels,” that is, as immortal as they. So that though we cannot boast of an eternity behind us, we being as to our particular persons, “but of yesterday,” (as holy Job expresseth it,) of little standing, yet we may, nay, we must, look upon ourselves as made for an eternity before us.

And then we number our days aright, when we consider our life here, not as the state for which we are finally designed, but only as a short passage to another state, and that eternal. When we think ourselves to be in this world, *non tanquam in domo, sed tanquam in hospitio*, “not as at home, but as it were in an inn,” where we are to lodge but for a while, as in our journey and travel to that which is our home indeed, our long, last, and eternal home. What a mighty influence would this consideration have upon our lives, if we would suffer it often and deeply to enter into our hearts! We should then clearly see what an unaccountable, what an extreme folly and madness it is for a man to be so very solicitous, so mightily concerned about the things of this life, as most men are; who tire and spend themselves in the pursuit of an happiness in this present world, which they can never attain, and if they could attain it, cannot long enjoy it; in the mean while very little, or not at all, thinking of that future state, wherein they must be indeed happy or miserable for ever.

It is impossible for him to be a worldly or wicked man, yea,

° Psalm cii. 25, 26.

it is impossible but that he should be a very spiritual and holy man, who often and seriously thinks of the shortness of this life, and the eternity of that which is to follow it. O eternity! (may I say again,) how surprising, how awakening are the thoughts of thee! Who so stupid, so senseless, as not to feel a trembling in his loins, when this thought comes into his mind, **WHAT IF I SHOULD BE LOST, AND MISCARRY FOR EVER!** And yet this great point depends upon our good or ill behaviour in that short space of time which is allotted us in this present world: which brings me to the consideration of the shortness of our life, compared with the great work and business of it.

3. To number our days aright, is to consider the shortness of our life here, compared with the main work and business of our life, the business of religion; for which chiefly God sent us into this world, and by which alone we can be fitted and prepared for eternal happiness in the other. It was the complaint of the physician of old, *vita brevis, ars longa*, that "the physician's life is short, but his art long and difficult," requiring much time and labour to understand it. The saying, with due explication, may not unfitly be applied to the Christian's life. Our life here is short, but the art of living well is long, difficult, and hard to be learned. It is true, the just and righteous, the good and merciful God, requires no more of us in order to our eternal happiness hereafter, than what He gives us time and power, opportunity and ability, to perform here. But, as we through our own folly generally order the matter, our time proves too short for our work. Deduct the time we spend in sleeping, eating, and drinking, which commonly amounts to at least one half of our time; the time required to the necessary works of our calling, the time we spend in recreation, in unnecessary visits and compliments, in idle company, *vel nihil agendo, vel male agendo*, "in doing either nothing, or that which is worse than nothing;" and the remainder will appear to be a very slender portion of time; too little, I fear, for the work and business of religion, the main end for which God made us, and sent us into this world.

To improve this argument, we may consider these two things. 1. That religion is a work, and that a hard and laborious one. 2. That this great work must be done within

the compass of this short uncertain life, or we are undone for ever.

1. Religion is a work, and that an hard and laborious one. The whole current of Scripture represents it under this notion to us. So much St. Paul signifies when he exhorts us to “work out our salvation with fear and trembling^p.” So our Saviour^q; “Labour not for that meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life.” But the exhortation of our Saviour is most pressing and emphatical^r; “Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life,” &c. The Greek word is *ἀγωνίζεσθε*, which signifies “to strive,” as wrestlers in the Olympic games. The work of religion therefore is an hard work, which cannot be performed by us without great striving and struggling. Hence the life of a Christian is compared by St. Paul to a wrestling^s; “Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.” In the same chapter he compares the Christian’s life to “a race^t,” and to “a fight^u.” And so he doth, 2 Tim. iv. 7, where he hath both the similitudes of a combat and a race together: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course.”

It were an easy matter clearly to demonstrate this truth, by unfolding the particulars of the Christian religion. But my allowance of time being but short, I shall briefly touch only on one, which is indeed the sum of all the rest, and that is the work of mortification. That this is a necessary act of Christian religion appears, because it is expressly required of every Christian; “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection^x,” &c. Yea, that it is required of us *sub periculo animæ*, “as we hope for salvation,” and to escape the wrath to come, we are plainly told^y, “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

Now that this act of religion is a great and laborious work,

^p Phil. ii. 12.

^q John vi. 27

^r Luke xiii. 24.

^s 1 Cor. ix. 25.

^t Ver. 24.

^u Ver. 26.

^x Col. iii. 5.

^y Rom. viii. 13.

will soon appear to him that considers what it is. It is to die unto sin, and to live unto righteousness; to put off those affections which are natural to us, or are rivetted in us by long custom, which is *altera natura*, “a second nature;” to change the whole frame of our dispositions and actions, and to become quite other men than formerly we were. This certainly must be *opus laboriosum et assiduum*, “a long and laborious work.”

It is true, Christ saith that “His yoke is easy, and His burden light.” But to whom? To minds duly disposed to receive it. It is agreeable to our right reason and understanding, and therefore easy to him who is under the government of reason, when raised above his sensual appetites and affections by the grace of God. It is an easy yoke, if it were put on betimes, before evil dispositions and habits be contracted. It will at length be easy to every man that takes it upon him by use and exercise, and the grace of God. But to men corrupted and vitiated by evil habits and customs, which is the case of most men before they undertake the yoke of Christ, it is no such easy thing; it is some time before it comes to sit evenly and smoothly upon their necks. Nay, to men that have gone on in a very long course and custom of sinning, the yoke of Christ is next to impossible to be borne. So God Himself tells us by the Prophet Jeremiah^a; “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good who are accustomed to do evil.” I shall make this plain by some instances.

Temperance is an easy, yea, most delightful virtue; it is agreeable to the reason of man, it preserves the faculties of his soul in their vigour, it conduces to that health of body which is the greatest outward blessing. Yet the habitual glutton or drunkard can sooner die than be temperate in his meat or drink. What more easy, than for a man that is able, to give alms to the indigent and necessitous? what more godlike or delightful virtue, than for a man to see the poor and miserable living upon and rejoicing in his bounty? But from the man who hath given himself to covetousness and the love of money, every alms comes as hardly, as if it were a drop of blood from his heart. What more pleasant, when good men meet together,

^a Chap. xiii. 23.

than freely to discourse of divine matters? But such discourse grates the ears of the carnal man. What more noble pleasure to a generous soul, than the meditation and contemplation of heavenly things? But set a sensual man to this work, and how unpleasant and tedious will it seem to him! What greater pleasure, what greater privilege to a soul duly disposed, than frequent converse with God in prayer? When he is oppressed with the cares and troubles of this life, when he is tired with the vanities of the world, what ease and satisfaction doth he find in unburdening his soul, and having recourse to his God! But to the man immersed in worldly cares or pleasures, prayer is *opus alienum*, “a strange work,” a disagreeable and unpleasant exercise; he is hardly drawn to it, he is frigid and dull in it, he is glad when he is rid of it. The like I might shew you in other instances.

Again, Christ’s yoke is easy, if taken together with the reward attending it. If we consider the infinite, endless bliss and happiness wherewith our short and slender service of our blessed Lord in this life shall be recompensed hereafter, all that He requires of us will appear to be a very easy condition, and indeed a very light yoke and burden. In this sense all the afflictions of this life, the bearing whereof is the hardest part of the Christian duty, are said to be light^b; “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” And the same Apostle again tells us^c; “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Nay, I may go yet farther, and affirm, that the law of Christ is an easy yoke, compared with the yoke of sin and Satan. The drudgery of the sinner in the service of sin is greater than the labour of the good man in the service of Christ, as I could easily demonstrate, if it were not too great a digression. It is a certain truth, that wicked men generally undergo more pain and difficulty in going to hell, than good men do in getting to heaven. In these senses we grant that Christ’s yoke is easy, and His burden light.

But they who think that Christianity is an easy thing in this

^b 2 Cor. iv. 17.

^c Rom. viii. 18.

sense, that it complies with their carnal ease, sloth, and negligence, are under a very gross and dangerous mistake. Indeed, as these men have represented the Christian religion to themselves, it is easy enough. If to talk of religion, and to make a show of it, were religion; if it were sufficient to perform some external acts of religion, as going to church when we have nothing else to do, or at those times when we are allowed to do any thing else; if praying now and then when we are in a good humour; if abstinence from some grosser and more infamous vices might serve the turn; these men were not much mistaken. But this is a very false notion of Christianity. The Christian's duty is a work and labour, and that of great difficulty, a labour of the heart, as being employed chiefly in setting the heart aright, in renewing the inward man, in changing our very natures and dispositions, and, in a word, in new moulding our souls to an holy and divine frame and temper, such as the Gospel of Christ sets before us.

So much of the first consideration, that our religion is a great and difficult work, a work of time and labour.

2. We are to consider that this great work must be done within the compass of this short, uncertain life, or we are undone for ever. We should do well often to call to mind the weighty words of our Saviour^d; "The night cometh" (*i. e.* the night of death) "when no man can work." This is the night, as St. Austin speaks, "wherein no man can work, but every man shall receive according to what he hath wrought^e." To believe in Christ, to repent, to do the works of righteousness, to exercise acts of piety and mercy in order to our acceptance with God, are works proper to the season of this life; when this life is past, the season is gone, and there is no more place for them for ever. Our blessed Saviour plainly teacheth us this in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus the beggar^f, where He gives us an account but of two sorts of men, the good and the wicked man, and assures us, that presently after death there is a vast gulf fixed between the places or states wherein they are, so that the one cannot pass unto the other; that is, the good man after death can never become miserable, nor the wicked

^d John ix. 4.

recipere quod operatus est.

^e In qua nemo potest operari, sed

^f Luke xvi.

man happy^g; “Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they that would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.” In the same state wherein we die, we must continue to all eternity. There is no after-game to be played in this case.

The doctrine of Purgatory, taught in the Church of Rome, is a vile cheat, that hath no foundation at all, either in Scripture, or in the belief of the primitive Church; yea, is plainly contrary to both. Wherefore, as we love our souls, let us not in the least depend upon it. Let us fix this as a most infallible conclusion, that if death seize upon us before we have repented with a true repentance proceeding from the love of God above all things, there is no hope, no redemption for us. Then neither our own prayers, nor the tears of others, will do us any good. All dirges and masses for our souls will then be insignificant. All the powers in heaven and earth cannot then help us. Nay, our blessed Saviour Himself cannot save us, because He hath positively declared He will not. “Behold! now” (whilst we live under the means of grace) “is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation^h.”

O that this consideration might enter deeply into our hearts! And that it may so do, let us often direct our thoughts to those wretched miserable souls, that are now in chains of darkness, irrevocably lost and undone for ever. How do they curse their own folly, in neglecting those opportunities of salvation, which we enjoy and they once had, but are now for ever denied! how many worlds, were they in their power, would they give to be where we are, in the House of God, to hear the promises of salvation offered to them, and to call upon God for mercy! how carefully would they frequent the prayers of the Church! how fervent would they be in those prayers! how often would they be upon their bended knees in private prayer! how greedily would they embrace all opportunities of salvation, when offered to them; every Sacrament they could receive, every Sermon they could hear! But, alas! their time is past, and they are excluded from the means of grace and salvation to all eternity. Now be assured, that if thou dost not seasonably repent and turn to God, thy case will very shortly

(God knows how soon) be the same with theirs, and thou shalt repent in hell for not repenting here.

I have done with my first observation, which was this: It is a matter of great use and concernment, mightily conducing to the purposes of religion, for a man to know his end, and the number of his days, what it is, *i. e.* seriously to consider the shortness and uncertainty of his life here on earth.

I have shewn you, that to know the measure of our days, or to number our days aright, is to consider seriously the shortness of our life, 1. absolutely and in itself; 2. comparatively: and that, 1. as compared with God's eternity; 2. as compared with our own eternity; 3. as compared with the main work and business of our life, the business of religion.

I pass now to the other observation, which I shall but briefly touch upon, and so conclude. It is this:

II. A due consideration of the shortness and uncertainty of man's life in this world is a gift of God, and the effect of His grace, which therefore we ought by prayer humbly and earnestly to ask of Him.

So David doth in my text; "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days," &c. One would think this were a needless prayer; for who knows not that he must die, and that the time of his death is uncertain, and yet certainly not far off? And who so brutish as not to consider this? But he must shut his eyes, and never look abroad into the world, that sees not the necessity of this prayer. A spirit of slumber and sottishness is fallen upon the generality of men, so that they seldom or never seriously think of that which so much concerns them. They see many of all ages fall into their graves round about them, and yet they live as if they themselves should never die.

The lesson of our mortality Divine Providence doth every day, yea, every hour and minute, press and inculcate on us, and as it were beat into us. The funeral bell ever and anon rings in our ears, and we daily tread upon the graves of others. Many of us already find the harbingers of death within us, we all see the triumphs of death without us, and (as our Church expresseth it) "in the midst of life we are in death." Alas! that among so many remembrancers, wherewith Providence hath surrounded us, we should, with that Monarch in story, need yet another

monitor to tell us every day, “Remember that thou art mortal.” Yet this is our case. What fatal stupidity is it that hath seized on us? Hath the frequency of these admonitions made them to lose their force and virtue on us? Are we become like sextons or grave-diggers, that by living as it were in the charnel-house, and daily conversing with the bones and skulls of dead men, at last become hardened, and of all mortals are the least apprehensive of their mortality? Or rather are we affectedly ignorant, and do we wilfully put the evil day far from us? Whatever the cause be, the effect is sadly visible.

So that every one of us hath reason to pray with David, “Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am:” and with Moses, “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” We have reason to pray, that God would never suffer us to fall into the folly of the blinded and infatuated world, who never entertain any serious thoughts of death and judgment, of heaven and hell, till death surprises them, till judgment arrests them, till heaven’s gates be finally shut against them, and hell swallows them up.

From this infatuation, God of His infinite mercy deliver us, through the merits of His only Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

To Whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, all adoration and worship, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

DISCOURSES.

DISCOURSE I.^a

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH FOR THE FIRST THREE AGES
OF CHRISTIANITY, CONCERNING THE BLESSED TRINITY, CONSIDERED,
IN OPPOSITION TO SABELLIANISM AND TRITHEISM.

THE unanimous sense of the Catholic Doctors of the Church, for the first three ages of Christianity, concerning the article of the Trinity, is in short this:

I. That there are in the Godhead three (not mere names or modes, but) really distinct hypostases or persons, the Father, the Son or Word of God, and the Holy Ghost.

II. That these three Persons are one God; which they thus explain:

1. There is but one fountain or principle of Divinity, God the Father, Who only is *Αὐτόθεος*, God of and from Himself; the Son and Holy Ghost deriving their Divinity from Him; the Son immediately from the Father, the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, or from the Father by the Son.

2. The Son and Holy Ghost are so derived from the fountain of the Divinity, as that they are not separate or separable from it, but do still exist in it, and are most intimately united to it.

All the Fathers insist upon this, that if there were more than one fountain of the Divinity, or if the three Persons were each of them a self-dependent principle of Divinity, or if the three Persons were separate from each other, then there would be three Gods. But being there is but one fountain of the Divinity, the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost deriving their Divinity from that fountain, and that so, as still to exist in it,

[^a This Discourse was written 1697, is stated at length in the *Life*, §. lxxxii. for the satisfaction of Lord Arundel, as p. 422.]

and be inseparably united to it, there is but one God. That this is the unanimous consent and constant doctrine of the primitive Fathers, I have fully shewed in my *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ*. I shall here resume, and more fully explain, only one testimony which I have there alleged, because it shews us what was then accounted Sabellianism, what Tritheism, and what the Catholic doctrine concerning the blessed Trinity; matters so hotly disputed among us at this day.

Dionysius, Bishop of Rome, who flourished about the year 259, whom his great namesake of Alexandria styles *λόγιόν τε καὶ θαυμάσιον*, “a learned and wonderful man,” in an Epistle against the Sabellians, (which doubtless he wrote, as the manner then was, with the advice and consent of the Clergy of his Diocese synodically convened,) after he had refuted the doctrine of Sabellius^b, thus proceeds to discourse against the contrary heresy of those “who divide and cut asunder, and overthrow the most sacred doctrine of the Church of God, parting the Monarchy into three certain powers and hypostases, separated from each other, and consequently into three Deities. For I hear that there are some catechists and teachers of the word of God among you, who maintain this opinion; therein diametrically, if I may so speak, opposing the hypothesis of Sabellius. For he blasphemeth by affirming that the Father is the Son, and, on the other side, that the Son is the Father; but these men in a manner teach three Gods, whilst they divide the holy Unity into hypostases, alien and wholly divided from each other. For it is absolutely necessary that we hold, that the Divine Word is united to the God of all things, and that the Holy Ghost remains and dwells in God; and also, that the Divine Trinity is gathered together and united into one, as into a certain head; I mean the omnipotent God, the Father of all things^c.”

Here we see what is Sabellianism, viz. To affirm that the Son is the Father, and the Father the Son; and consequently that the Holy Ghost is the same with both. And all they come

^b Apud Athan. de Decret. Syn. Nic. tom. i. p. 275. [c. 26. vol. i. p. 231.]

^c And afterwards in the conclusion he saith, that in this way only, καὶ ἡ θεία Τριάς καὶ τὸ ἅγιον κήρυγμα τῆς

μοναρχίας διασώζονται, i. e. “Both the Divine Trinity,” (that is, a real Trinity,) “and also the holy doctrine of the Monarchy, can be preserved.” [p. 232.]

very near this heresy, who acknowledge only a modal distinction between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. What is Tritheism he also shews us plainly, viz. That it is to hold, that the three Persons in the Trinity are of a different nature, or separated and divided from each other; or that there is more than one fountain or principle of the Divinity. According to which account, Dr. Sherlock is certainly clear from the charge of Tritheism: the Catholic doctrine he declares to be this, "That there are three really distinct hypostases in the Godhead, and yet that there is but one God; because the Father only is the Head of the Divinity, and the Son and Holy Ghost, as they are derived from Him, so they exist in Him, and are inseparably united to Him."

Of such a distinction and union of persons we have indeed no example, or exact similitude among created beings: but what then? It does not follow that therefore there cannot be such a distinction and union in the transcendent and most spiritual nature of God. The Antitrinitarians can never produce a demonstrative reason to prove that this cannot be; and Divine Revelation assures us that so it is. The most weighty arguments that are brought by the Antitrinitarians against a distinction of hypostases in the Godhead are reducible to one, which if well answered, the rest will fall to the ground. The argument is this:

The most simple being admits of no distinction.

God is the most simple being;

Therefore God admits of no distinction.

Answer. If the Antitrinitarians that make this objection, are the Socinians among us, as I presume they are, it is news to hear that they should argue from the simplicity of the Godhead, seeing the great masters of that sect, Socinus, Crellius, &c. held that God is a material Being, and consequently compounded of matter and form. Express citations to this purpose may be seen in Dr. Edwards's *Antidote against Socinianism*^d.

This opinion they held, because they could not conceive how there can be any substance that is purely spiritual, and abstracted from all matter: and if they could have conceived this, perhaps they would not have stuck at the doctrine of the

^d Part I. p. 65, 66.

Trinity. For the great difficulty of conceiving a Trinity in Unity in the Godhead, arises chiefly from hence, that men are apt to measure the Divine nature from ideas and notions taken from material things. But to the purpose :

1. The simplicity of the Divine nature does indeed exclude all mixture; *i. e.* all composition of things heterogeneous in the Godhead, there being nothing in God but what is God; but for all that, there may be distinction of hypostases in the Godhead, provided they are homogeneous, and of the same nature, as the Catholic doctrine teaches.

2. The simplicity of the Divine nature, if rightly considered, is so far from excluding, that it necessarily infers a distinction of hypostases in the Godhead. For wherein does the simplicity of the Godhead especially consist but in this, that God is a pure eternal mind, free from the mixture of all kind of matter whatsoever? Now an eternal mind must needs have in it from eternity an *έννοια* or *λόγος*, “a notion or conception of itself,” which the schools term *verbum mentis*; nor can it be conceived without it. This word in God cannot be, as it is in us, a transient, vanishing accident, for then the Divine nature would indeed be compounded of substance and accident, which would be repugnant to its simplicity; but it must be a substantial subsisting word. The great Apostolical Bishop of Neocæsarea, Gregory, surnamed Thaumaturgus, in his Panegyric to Origen, (by all confessed to be genuine,) calls it, “the most perfect, living, and animate word of the very first mind^e.” This word also is manifestly (though not divided, yet) distinct from the eternal mind from whence it proceeds. And this is no novel subtlety of the schools, but a notion that runs through all the Fathers, even those of the first ages, as appears from the testimonies produced out of them in my *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ*, and it is also grounded on Holy Scripture.

Hence the excellent Athanasius, than whom no man better understood the sense of Scripture and the Doctors of the Church that were before him in the article of the Trinity, insists upon it in his Oration against the Sabellians. In the beginning of which, having first shewn how the Catholic

^e Τελειότατον καὶ ζῶντα καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ πρώτου νοῦ λόγον ἐμψυχον.

Church of Christ, in her notion and worship of God, differs from the Heathens and Jews, he proceeds to declare the difference betwixt the orthodox Christians and the Sabellians, and other Unitarians of his time, who, under pretence of defending the Unity of the Godhead, denied all distinction of hypostases therein. His words are these; "We are separated also from those who corrupt Christianity with Judaism, who, denying the God of God, profess one God as the Jews do, affirming Him (the Father) to be the only God, not upon account that He only is unbegotten, and the only Fountain of the Deity, but as if He were without a Son, and barren, and void of His living Word and true Wisdom. For they conceive the word of God to be such as proceeds from the mind of man, and His wisdom to be such as that of ours; and therefore affirm God with His Word to be one Person, just as we say that a man together with his word is one man; being in this no wiser than the Jews, who own not the Evangelist in the beginning of his Gospel, proclaiming, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' For if God hath a word in His mind not really begotten of Him as God of God, how could 'the Word be with God,' and how could it be 'God?' For the word conceived in the mind of man is not a man with another man, seeing it neither lives nor subsists, but is only a motion or operation of the same living subsisting mind."

This great man took it for granted, that St. John, in the text alleged, meant that "the Word was with God in the beginning," before any created being existed, and consequently that He is called "the Word of God," not with respect to the creatures, (though it is true that He afterwards revealed the will of God to mankind, and might in that respect also be called "the Word of God,") but with respect to God the Father, Whose Word He eternally was, and with Whom He was "in the beginning;" and therefore He was not the same hypostasis with Him, and yet He was God as well as the Father. He had never heard of the senseless interpretation of Socinus, who by "the beginning" in that text understands "the beginning of the Gospel;" there being then no heretic (among those many that opposed the Divinity of our Lord) who had the confidence to advance so ridiculous a

sense of those words: Lælius Socinus hath the honour of that interpretation.

If it be objected, that all this being granted proves only two hypostases in the Godhead, not a Trinity; I answer, 1. This proves that a distinction of hypostases in the Godhead is very consistent with its simplicity; nay, that from the true notion of the simplicity of the Godhead, such a distinction necessarily follows. 2. If there be two hypostases in the Godhead, there may be a third; and that there is a third, the Holy Scripture assures us. Indeed, I do not remember that any of the Fathers of the first three centuries have attempted to explain distinctly the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, or from the Father by the Son; there being little or no dispute concerning the Divinity of the Holy Ghost till Macedonius appeared, and disputed the faith of the Church in that article. For before him, all the Antitrinitarians, of what sort soever, chose especially to oppugn the Divinity of the Son of God, taking occasion from those texts of Scripture which respect His human nature, and that economy which for our salvation He took upon Him. Which pretence seeing they had not to make use of in disputing against the Godhead of the Holy Ghost, they thought it best to say nothing of it, contenting themselves in opposing the Divinity of the Son, and by consequence to overthrow that of the Holy Spirit. But in general I have observed, that those primitive Fathers held the Holy Ghost to be as it were *vinculum Trinitatis*, "the bond of the Holy Trinity," the union of Father and Son. Hence some ancient doxologies run thus, "Glory be to the Father and the Son in the unity of the Holy Ghost." And the most learned Christian philosopher, Athenagoras, who flourished very near the first succession of the Apostles, expressly affirms the Father and the Son to be one, ἐνότητι Πνεύματος^f, i. e. "by the unity of the Spirit;" which I think imports the same thing with what St. Augustin and other later Fathers say, that the Holy Ghost is *Amor Patris et Filii*. But this by the way.

There is another notion which frequently occurs in the writings of the primitive Fathers, tending to shew the incongruity of asserting the Godhead to be so simple a Being, as to

[^f p. 287. in ed. J.ust. Mart.]

be μονόπρόσωπος, “a solitary single hypostasis,” which hath also a foundation in the Holy Scriptures, and it is this; “without acknowledging a distinction of hypostases in the Godhead, we cannot well conceive that ἀντάρκεια which we attribute to God, *i. e.* His self-sufficiency and most perfect bliss and happiness in Himself alone, before and without all created beings.” But by admitting this it plainly appears, that Himself alone is a most perfect and blessed society, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit eternally conversing with and enjoying each other. See Prov. viii. 22—31. inclusive: where the wisdom of God, which is said to be “with God from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth was, and to be His continual delight,” all the Fathers unanimously understood to be (as indeed the words themselves literally and plainly import) Σοφία ὑφ'εστῶσα, “a subsisting personal wisdom,” *i. e.* the Son of God, who is accordingly by St. Paul expressly styled “the wisdom of God^h.” And that the Λόγος, or “Son of God,” was known by the ancient Jews themselves under the title of “the wisdom of God,” sufficiently appears from many passages in Philo, and from the author of the Book of Wisdom, chap. vii. 26. compared with Col. i. 15. and Heb. i. 3.

To conclude: The doctrine of the Church concerning the blessed Trinity hath been abundantly confirmed by Catholic writers, both ancient and modern, from many clear texts out of the Holy Scriptures; which, as they assert the unity of the Godhead, so do they also plainly teach us, that there are three to whom the essential attributes and proper operations of the Godhead do belong, viz. the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The interpretations, whereby Socinus and his more immediate followers endeavoured to elude the texts alleged by the Catholics, are so manifestly forced and strained, that I do not see

† Ante omnia Deus erat solus, ipse sibi et mundus et locus et omnia: solus autem quia nihil aliud extrinsecus præter ipsum; cæterum ne tunc quidem solus; habebat enim secum, quam habebat in seipso, rationem suam scilicet. Hanc Græci Λόγον dicunt. Tertul. advers. Prax. cap. v. Satis igitur nobis scire solum, nihil esse Deo cœvnum; nihil erat præter ipsum, ipse solus multus erat. Neque enim erat sine ratione,

(Gr. τῷ Λόγῳ,) &c. Hippol. Hom. de Deo trino et uno. Bibl. PP. tom. xv. p. 622. Οὐ θέμις ἔστιν, οὐδὲ ἀκίνδυνον διὰ τὴν ἀσθάνειαν ἡμῶν τὸ ὅσον ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἀποστερεῖσθαι τὸν Θεὸν τοῦ ἀεὶ συνόντος ἀπὸ τοῦ Λόγου μονογενοῦς. Σοφίας ὅντος ἢ προσέχαιρεν οὕτω γὰρ οὐδὲ ἀεὶ χαίρων νοηθήσεται. Origen. apud Athanasium, tom. i. p. 277. [de Decret. Nic. c. 27. p. 233.]

^h 1 Cor. i. 24.

how any honest mind, that bears any reverence or respect to the sacred Scriptures, can away with them. This the Socinians among us of late seem to be sensible of, and therefore have taken a shorter, but more desperate course, by calling in question the authority of the principal Scriptures alleged by us. Thus the author of the pamphlet, entitled *The Judgment of the Fathers*, &c. disputes the authority of the Gospel of St. John. For he tells us from Epiphanius, that the Alogians or Alogi (whom, according to his accustomed impudence, he highly magnifies, and affirms to be the purest and most ancient Gentile Christians, yea, and coeval with the Apostles, whereas Epiphaniusⁱ expressly saith, that the heresy of the Alogi appeared in the world after the Cataphrygians, (or Montanists,) the Quintilians, and the sect of the Quartodecimani, and therefore could not be earlier than about the beginning of the third century) were so called, because they denied the *Λόγος*, or “Word,” of which St. John speaks in his Gospel, Epistles, and Revelations. They said, that all those pieces were written by Cerinthus, under the name of St. John; and in his Considerations he produceth their arguments, and with this preface, that he “should be glad to see a good answer to the exceptions of those Unitarians against those books we receive of St. John’s.” Which implies, that he thinks those arguments (which in truth are but senseless cavils) have not been sufficiently answered by Epiphanius, or any other Catholic; and that he himself cannot tell how to answer them, and therefore must submit to the force of them, till he receives better information.

Now as for the Apocalypse; we acknowledge that it hath been questioned by some, not only heretics, but Catholics; but upon slight grounds, as hath been sufficiently shewed by divers learned interpreters, and particularly by Grotius, in the preface to his Annotations upon it. The second and third Epistles also have been, and still are, doubted of by many, who rather think them to be written by St. John the Presbyter; (see Grotius again in the preface to his Notes on the second Epistle.) But as for the Gospel and first Epistle attributed to St. John, they have always been received in the Church of God as his undoubted and genuine writings. They are cited as St. John’s

ⁱ Hær. LI. in ipso initio.

by the Catholic Fathers that lived nearest the times of that Apostle; and particularly by Irenæus, who was an auditor of St. Polycarp, the disciple of St. John.

As for their being written by Cerinthus the heretic, no man in his wits, and that understands any thing of the dogmata of Cerinthus, can imagine it. For it is evident, that the first chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, and divers passages throughout his first Epistle, are directly opposite to the Cerinthian hypothesis, as I have fully shewn^k; and accordingly, Irenæus and others of the ancients testify, that they were purposely written by St. John against the Cerinthian heresy, which in his time began to trouble the Church. So that those heretics who fathered the Gospel and first Epistle, which we receive as St. John's, upon Cerinthus, were by Epiphanius deservedly named "*Ἀλογοί*, men in this void of all sense and reason.

But before I dismiss this account of the Alogi from Epiphanius, I must not omit by the way to observe, that they rejected, not only his Gospel and Revelation, but his Epistles also, and all upon the same account, because in them there was mention made of the divine *Λόγος*, which they disowned, affirming Christ to be entirely and wholly a mere man that had no existence before the blessed Virgin. Now where is there any text in the Epistles of St. John concerning the *Λόγος*, that should give such offence to the Alogi? Surely the most likely text is that in the first Epistle^l; "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word," (*ὁ Λόγος*,) "and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." This text then was extant in the Greek copies of the first Epistle of St. John, in the age wherein the Alogi lived, *i. e.* about the beginning of the third century. And accordingly Tertullian, who then flourished, manifestly alludes to it in his book against Praxeas^m, in these words, "Connexus Patris in Filio, et Filii in Paraclete, tres efficit cohærentes, alterum ex altero, qui tres unum sunt, (*οἱ τρεῖς ἐν εἰσιν*,) non unus." And not long after him, St. Cyprian more clearly and fully, "De Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est, hi tres unum suntⁿ." But to proceed.

^k Jud. Eccl. Cath. II, 3. et

^m Cap. xxv.

^l Chap. v. 7.

ⁿ De Unitate Eccl. cap. iv. prope finem.

The same author tells usⁿ, “He cannot believe that the eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth verses of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews were originally a part of that Epistle, but have been fraudulently added.” Who can help the infidelity of one who is such a slave to his hypothesis as to resolve to believe nothing against it, though never so certain? Those verses are found in all the Greek copies of the Epistle to the Hebrews at this day extant; and all ancient versions of that Epistle, the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic, render them. But the divine author’s applying the words of the Psalmist concerning the creation of heaven and earth to the Son of God^o, is so clear a proof of His Divinity, that the Socinian knew not what to say to it, and therefore resolves it shall be no Scripture. Indeed he would seem to slight the argument of the Catholics from those verses, if admitted to be a part of the Epistle, and would persuade us that it is easily answered, by saying, that “the heavens and earth” there meant, are only the “new heavens and earth” foretold by the Prophets, even the Gospel economy and state.

But can the heavens and earth, which are said to be made *κατ’ ἀρχὰς*, “in the beginning,” or of old, as it is in Psalm cii. 25, possibly be understood of the new heavens and earth, foretold by the Prophets, as to come? Can it be said of the new heavens and earth, or the Gospel-state, that they “shall perish and wax old as a garment, and as a vesture be folded up?” Certainly whoever can give credit to such an interpretation must be given up to a reprobate mind.

But, *O Deus! in quæ nos tempora reservasti, ut ista patiamur?* as the blessed Martyr Polycarp was wont to say, when he heard the blasphemies of the heretics of his time: the same wretched author is not afraid to say, “There are shrewd presumptions, that to the institution of Baptism by our Saviour, in the Gospel of St. Matthew, these words have been added, ‘In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost’.”

They are presumptions, and shrewd presumptions indeed, that are opposed to the faith of all the copies of St. Matthew’s Gospel at this day extant, and to all the ancient versions of it,

ⁿ Judgment of the Fathers, p. 30.

^r Judgment of the Fathers, p. 22.

^o Ver. 10—12.

and to the practice of the universal Church of Christ throughout the world, founded on these words, as undoubtedly the words of our Saviour. But what are the shrewd presumptions he speaks of? He names but one, and that is this: "It appears in the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles, that the Apostles never baptized in that form of words, but only in the name of the Lord Jesus." But where doth this appear, either in the Acts or Epistles of the Apostles, that when the Apostles baptized any man, they did it in this form only, "I baptize thee in the name of the Lord Jesus?" It is said indeed, that "they baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus;" *i. e.* into the faith and religion of the Lord Jesus; viz. according to the form of Baptism prescribed by the Lord Jesus Himself, *i. e.* "In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Are not they baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, that are baptized according to that form? do not we all understand the Lord Jesus to be meant by the second Person named in that form, viz. the Son? Hence Grotius upon those words, Acts xix. 5, "And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," hath this note, "In nomen Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti." And for this he refers us to his notes on Matt. xxviii. 19, where he handles this matter at large.

Indeed this will clearly appear, if we do but look back to the verses preceding the aforementioned text in the Acts: there we read^a, that St. Paul, meeting with certain Christians at Ephesus, asked them whether they had "received the Holy Ghost?" To which they answered, that they had "not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." St. Paul, wondering at this, replies, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" As if he had said, How can you be ignorant whether there be any Holy Ghost? have you not been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost? If not, after what form, or how have you been baptized? "And they said, Unto John's baptism." John indeed, as the Apostle rejoins, only baptized unto repentance, thereby to prepare men for the reception of the Messiah, that was to come after him. He did not baptize in the name of the Lord Jesus, *i. e.* "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This

^a Ver. 1—3.

form of Baptism was first appointed by our Saviour Himself, and that not till after the resurrection, just before He was to ascend into heaven, and from thence soon after to pour out the Holy Ghost after a wonderful manner upon the Apostles. Then, and not before, they were commanded by our Lord to baptize, “in plena et adunata Trinitate,” as St. Cyprian^r expresses it.

To the most holy and undivided Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, adoration and worship, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

^r Epist. ad Jubaianum.

DISCOURSE II.^a

THE PRINCIPAL PARTS AND BRANCHES OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE,
WITH RULES AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE DUE PERFORMANCE OF
EACH OF THEM.

In a Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese of St. David's.

Reverend Brethren of the Clergy,

I SHALL not waste my time and little strength by detaining you with a long and useless preface. In short, my business at this time shall be to set before you the several parts and branches of that holy office and function, which you have undertaken, together with some rules and directions which are necessary to be observed for the due performance of each of them.

The principal parts and branches of the Pastoral office are these five.

First, Reading Divine Service, or the Prayers of the Church.

Secondly, Preaching.

Thirdly, Catechising.

Fourthly, Administering the holy Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Fifthly and lastly, Visiting of the sick.

First, Reading Divine Service, or the Prayers of the Church. This some may think to be a slight and easy matter, that needs not any advice or directions; but they are very much mistaken. For to the reading of the Prayers aright there is need of great care and caution. The Prayers of the Church must be read audibly, distinctly, and reverently.

1. Audibly, so that if possible, all that are present may hear

^a [This appears to have been delivered in 1708. See Sermon VI.]

them and join in them. There are some that mutter the Prayers, as if they were to pray only to themselves, whereby they exclude most of the congregation from the benefit of them.

2. The Prayers of the Church ought to be read distinctly and leisurely; not to be gallopped over, as the manner of some is, who read the Prayers so fast that they outrun the attention and devotion of the people, not giving them time to join with them, or to make their responses in their due places. This rule is to be observed in reading the Prayers throughout, but especially in reading the Decalogue or Ten Commandments in the second service. There are some that read the Commandments so thick one upon another, that the people have not time to add that excellent prayer to each of them, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law."

To this head, of distinct reading the Prayers, I shall only add this one observation. Whereas upon Sundays and holy-days the Church hath appointed a first and second service to be read one after another, it is convenient that there be a decent interval betwixt them. For judge, I pray you, how absurd it may seem to conclude the first service with St. Chrysostom's prayer, and "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," and immediately without any intermission to enter upon the second service.

I verily believe the first intention of the Church was, that these two services should be read at two several times in the morning; but now custom and the Rubric direct us to use them both at the same time. Yet in Cathedral or mother Churches there is still a decent distinction between the two services: for before the Priest goes to the Altar to read the second service, there is a short but excellent anthem sung, in imitation whereof in the churches of London, and in other greater churches of the country, instead of that anthem there is part of a psalm sung.

3. And lastly, the Prayers of the Church are to be read with great reverence and devotion, so as to excite and kindle devotion in the congregation. Thus the Prayers of the Church are to be read, if we would keep up the reputation of them, and render them useful to the people. But, alas! there are too many

Ministers, who by disorderly and indecent and irreverent reading of the Liturgy disgrace it, and expose it to contempt. To whom the Church may complain, as one of old in the poet did, of the ill rehearsal of his oration:

Quem recitas meus est, O Fidentine, libellus,
Sed male dum recitas incipit esse tuus.

“The book of prayers which ye read is indeed mine, but at the sad rate you read it, I am ashamed of it, it is none of mine, but yours.”

I am verily persuaded that this is one cause that there are so many sectaries and separatists among us. They find so little reverence and devotion in the use of our common prayers, that they cannot away with them, but run from the Church to the conventicle, where they hope to find more devotion.

II. Another part of the Pastoral office is Preaching, *i. e.* (as we commonly use the word) taking a text or portion of Scripture, explaining it, raising some useful point of doctrine from it, and applying it to the edification of the hearers. For otherwise the bare reading of the Scriptures is sometimes called preaching; as Acts xv. 21: “For Moses” (that is, the writings of Moses) “of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.” But here I take the word preaching in the forementioned sense, as now it is used. This is a noble part of the Pastor’s duty, but difficult; it is not a work that every one should undertake or can perform: for it requires the knowledge and understanding of the Holy Scriptures, and in order thereunto, some skill in the learned languages and other parts of human learning; it requires a good judgment and discretion, I add elocution too. The time will not give me leave (if I were able) to set before you all the rules or precepts of the art of preaching, and to give you an entire system of it. There are many learned men who have written full treatises of this subject; I mention only our excellent Bishop Wilkins, who hath published a treatise, entitled, *Ecclesiastes, or The Preacher*, which I recommend to the reading of younger Divines and first beginners in the art of preaching: to whom also I give this farther advice, that they should not at first trust to their own compositions, but furnish themselves with store of the best

Sermons that have been published by the learned Divines of our Church. These they should read often, and study to imitate them, and in time they will attain to an habit of good preaching themselves. Among the printed Sermons, those of the late Archbishop Tillotson are well known and approved by all.

But what shall be done in those poor parishes, where there are as poor Ministers, altogether incapable of performing this duty of preaching in any tolerable manner? I answer, That in such places, Ministers, instead of Sermons of their own, should use the Homilies of the Church, which ought to be in every parish. And they would do well also, now and then to read a chapter or section out of the Whole Duty of Man, which (I presume) is translated into the Welsh tongue. I add, that it would be a piece of charity if the Clergy of the neighbourhood to such places, who are better qualified, would sometimes visit those dark corners, and lend some of their light to them, by bestowing now and then a Sermon on the poor people, suited to their capacities and necessities. They have my leave, yea, and authority so to do; and they may be sure the good God will not fail to reward them.

III. The third work of the Pastor's office is Catechising, without which Preaching will not be sufficient. For if people be not well instructed in the necessary principles of religion when they are young, they will hardly attain to any sound knowledge when they are old. For according to the Greek apophthegm,

Νεκρὸν ἰατρεύειν καὶ γέροντα νοουθετεῖν ταῦτόν ἐστι.

“To instruct an ignorant old man and to raise a dead man are things almost equally difficult.” I shall not insist upon this subject, for the usefulness and necessity of Catechising is acknowledged by all, though the work itself is by many of the Clergy sadly neglected. Where such neglect is, it is the duty of the Churchwardens to present. I shall make it my business to see this fault amended.

IV. Another, and a main part of the Priest's office, is the administration of the holy Sacraments, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

First, for Baptism; the Church strictly requires that it be

performed publicly, in the House of God, not in private houses, except in case of real necessity; as when a child is weak, and cannot without endangering itself be brought to church. But notwithstanding this strict order of our Church, in most places in this country, Baptism is altogether administered in private houses, and scarce any (if any) baptized in the church. If this may be allowed, away with the fonts in your churches; what do they signify? to what purpose are they there? If all the authority I am invested with can do it, I will see this lamentable abuse of the sacrament of Baptism reformed.

But farther observe, that as our Church strictly requires that Baptism be administered in public, so it advises that it be performed (if conveniently it may be) on the Lord's Day, in a full congregation of Christian people. Hear the words of the Rubric.

“The people are to be admonished that it is most convenient that Baptism should not be administered but upon Sundays and other holydays, when the most number of people come together; as well for that the congregation there present may testify the receiving of them that be newly baptized into the number of Christ's Church, as also because in the Baptism of infants every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in Baptism.”

I take leave to add, that it is most for the interest of the infant to be so baptized, that it may have the benefit of the united prayers of a full Christian congregation, which is much to be valued. Methinks there should be no need of urging this to parents, that have any real love or affection to their children: this would incline them to desire that themselves, which the Church desires of them. Remember, I beseech you, that your children are to be but once baptized; and what is but once done, ought to be well done, in the best and most perfect manner.

To come to the other Sacrament, the Eucharist, or Holy Supper; this is the most sacred and mysterious rite, the apex, the top and perfection of Christian worship, as the ancients term it, and therefore it ought to be performed with the greatest reverence and solemnity in every punctilio of it, according to the direction of our Church in her Rubric to the Communion

Office. But this you are especially to take care of, that you administer not the Holy Sacrament to persons known to be vicious and scandalous. Hear the Rubric of the Church to this purpose; viz.

“So many as intend to be partakers of the Holy Communion, shall signify their names to the Curate at least some time the day before.—And if any of those be an open and notorious evil liver, or have done any wrong to his neighbours, by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended; the Curate having knowledge thereof shall call him, and advertise him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord’s Table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former naughty life, that the congregation may thereby be satisfied which before were offended, and that he hath recompensed the parties to whom he hath done wrong, or at least to declare himself to be in full purpose so to do, as soon as he conveniently may.”

I am not ignorant, that there are some who plead for a free admission to the Lord’s Table of all that are members of the visible Church, and not yet excommunicated; and exclaim against the exclusion of men from the Holy Communion, as a device and usurpation of the Presbyterians and other sectaries: but these men are grossly mistaken, for you see it is the express order of our Church. I add, that the same order was observed in the Primitive and Apostolical Churches. For Justin Martyr, who flourished within forty years after the Apostolic age, (*i. e.* after the death of St. John the Apostle,) in his second Apology^b tells us, that in his time none were admitted to the Holy Eucharist, but those who lived according to the law of Christ. It is a received distinction among Divines, that there is a twofold excommunication, *excommunicatio major et minor*, “the greater and the lesser excommunication.” The greater excommunication is an exclusion of a man from the Communion of the Church, and the public Ordinances universally. The lesser excommunication is indeed in order to prevent the greater, and to bring men under the discipline and correction of the Church for the amendment of their lives, that so at length they may be fit to be admitted to the Holy Communion.

^b [*i. e.* the first Apology, (§. 66.) according to the later editions.]

So our Church informs us in her Rubric to the Communion Office, where the Minister, repelling any from the Communion, is required "to give an account thereof to the Ordinary within fourteen days after at the farthest; and the Ordinary shall proceed against the offending person according to the Canon." So much for the administration of the holy sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

V. I come to the fifth and last part of the Pastoral office, viz. Visiting the Sick. For this we have an express command in the Holy Scriptures^c; "Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church;" *i. e.* the Presbyters of the Church; as supposing they may not otherwise have notice of his sickness. Sick men too commonly neglect this duty; oftentimes out of fear, proceeding from an evil conscience. They look upon the Minister's coming to their sick-bed, as a kind of a messenger of death, for which they are not so well prepared. But if the sick man does not send for his Minister, the Minister (having other notice of his sickness) ought to go to him without being sent for.

How to perform this duty towards sick men aright, our Church fully directs him in her excellent Office of the Visitation of the Sick, which is so full and perfect, that there needs nothing to be added to it.

But observe farther, that it is the Pastor's duty to visit his parishioners, not only when they are sick, but also when they are well and in good health; not only with common neighbourly visits, but visiting them to the purposes of salvation. He should sometimes go home to their houses, and minister to their souls in private; mildly reproofing them for what faults he observes in them, admonishing them of such duties as he knows them to be ignorant of; as not coming constantly to Church, not frequenting the Communion, and the like. He is there seriously to call upon them, to mind them of the great concern of their immortal souls in time to prepare for sickness and death, and the tremendous judgment that follows. Such particular private applications of the Minister to his parishioners, are highly useful, and will render the public Ordinances more beneficial to them.

^c James v. 14.

To you, my brethren of the Clergy, I shall conclude all I have to say, in a short but serious and affectionate exhortation.

1. In the first place, and above all things, follow after holiness, “without which no man shall see the Lord.” Holiness is a qualification indispensably required in every Christian, and that *sub periculo animæ*, “as he hopes to be saved,” and to see the face of God in heaven. And can it be imagined that a Minister of God should be saved without it? Nay, he is obliged to holiness in a double capacity, both as a Christian and as a Minister. As a Minister, his calling obliges him to be almost perpetually conversant about holy things; which he profanes, if he be not himself an holy person. He profanes God’s holy Worship, His holy Word, and His holy Sacraments; and God will most certainly and severely punish such profaners of His sacred things.

Nay, a Minister of God is obliged to an exemplary holiness. Epiphanius tells us, that the duty of the laity is, *Τὸ σύμμετρον καὶ τὸ συγγνωστόν*, “a more moderate measure of piety,” suited to their capacity, and tempered with a greater indulgence and mercy. But from the Clergy is expected *ἡ περὶ πάντων ἀκριβολογία*, “a more exact and accurate course of life in all things.” And St. Paul speaks to the same purpose, when he charges Titus to shew himself “in all things an example” or pattern “of good works^d.” For every pattern must be excellent and extraordinary, and such as is worthy of imitation. This the people will expect from us, that we should go before them, and lead them on to virtue and piety by our example. And however they fail in other civilities, they will be sure generally to observe this piece of good manners, they will readily give us the precedence in the way to heaven, and be content to follow us at a very humble distance. So that our conversation must be somewhat extraordinary, if we expect by our example to bring them up to the ordinary and necessary measures of piety, and we shall hardly be able to do well, unless we ourselves do somewhat excellently.

2. Be diligent, very diligent, in the business of your calling; for it is a laborious calling, that will not admit of ease and idleness. I speak especially to the younger Clergy; ply your

^d Titus ii. 7.

studies, give yourselves to reading, chiefly the Holy Scriptures, and the writings of learned men that have explained them to you.

The exhortations of St. Paul to Timothy are full to this purpose: "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all^e." Consider, I beseech you, what kind of person he was whom St. Paul thus exhorts: he was one, who from a child knew the Holy Scriptures; one that had the gift of prophecy, and was endued with extraordinary and even miraculous gifts. This man St. Paul earnestly calls upon to be diligent in reading and study; what need then have we, even the best of us, of this diligence, who are so very far short of his accomplishments! In a word, an idle person in any calling whatsoever is very contemptible; but an idle and lazy Parochial Priest, is of all mortals the most contemptible and inexcusable. What! so much business, and that of so great importance as the salvation of men's souls, and yet idle? For the Lord's sake shake off sloth, rouse up and bestir yourselves in the business of your calling, remembering that the souls of your people, and your own souls, are at stake.

3. And lastly, Be much and often in prayer to God, especially in private prayer. Content not yourselves with reading prayers at Church, but take care also that there be daily prayers in your families, at least morning and evening; and some time every day retire to your studies, and there, upon your bended knees, earnestly beseech Almighty God to have mercy on you, to direct and assist you in your studies, and to give you good success in your labours. Pray for the souls of the people committed to your charge; pray for your own souls, that "while you preach to others, you yourselves may not be castaways."

If you do these things, if you adorn your holy profession with an holy conversation, if you be diligent in the business of your calling, if you pray daily to God for His help and assistance, He will not fail to be with you, and to carry you through all difficulties with honour and success; and in the end your

^e 1 Tim. iv. 13, 15.

reward will be great and glorious, and an abundant compensation of all your labours. So St. Peter tells you in that excellent text^f, with which I shall conclude, “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

And now a word or two to you my brethren of the laity.

First, Give honour and respect to your Pastors for the Lord’s sake, whatever their personal defects may be; (which you are to overlook, and not, like cursed Cham, delight to pry into the nakedness of your fathers;) their character and office calls for this from you. The contempt of the Clergy at last redounds to the contempt of all religion. So our Saviour tells you, speaking of His Apostles, and in them of their successors, “He that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me.”

Secondly, Be strictly just in paying them their dues: that little they have, let them have in quiet. Do not put them to vexatious lawsuits, to the disturbance of their studies, and thereby to your own loss. You will take it ill to be called thieves, and yet such you are; yea, guilty of the worst of thefts, sacrilege. For by denying Ministers their dues you rob God, as God Himself tells you^g; “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Whercin have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings,” &c. If any poor Minister be oppressed and injured in this kind, I will be a patron to him, stand by and defend him.

In the last place, one word to you that are Churchwardens. Remember you are upon your oaths; do not therefore for fear or favour of men perjure yourselves, *i. e.* damn your own souls. The office of a Churchwarden, to which he is sworn, is not so difficult as some men make it; an honest man may easily discharge it; for it is only to be honest, and present matters according to the best of his skill and knowledge.

^f 1 Pet. v. 2—4.

^g Mal. iii. 8.

DISCOURSE III.

CONCERNING THE SPIRIT OF GOD IN THE FAITHFUL; HOW AND IN WHAT MANNER IT DOTTH BEAR WITNESS WITH THEIR SPIRITS, THAT THEY ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD; AND WHAT DEGREE OF HOPE OR PERSUASION CONCERNING THEIR ADOPTION THIS WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT DOTTH ORDINARILY PRODUCE IN THE FAITHFUL.

ST. PETER hath long ago observed, that in the Epistles of his brother Apostle St. Paul, there are some *δυσνόητα*, "things hard to be understood;" which the ignorant and unlearned did in his time (as indeed there are some such that still do so in our time) "wrest to their own destruction^a." And he seems in that place, if it be heedfully considered, to have a special respect to St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, which indeed hath more of those *δυσνόητα*, or difficult passages, than any other of his Epistles. Such is his discourse of justification by faith without works, which runs throughout the Epistle, which was abused even in the Apostolic age to a dangerous kind of solifidianism by the Gnostic heretics; against whose perverse interpretation St. James afterwards wrote his Epistle as an antidote.

And indeed St. Paul himself expounds himself in another Epistle very plainly to the same purpose^b; "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." From whence it is evident, that by the faith to which he attributes justification, he means not an idle faith, but a working faith, attended with works of love both toward God and our neighbour; and, consequently, that the works he excludes from justification are not evangelical works, or such as are done in and proceed from faith in Christ; but only, first, works of perfect obedience, or sinless works,

^a 2 Pet. iii. 16.

^b Viz. Gal. v. 6.

there being none such to be found among the sons of fallen man: or, secondly, works done in the strength of the Mosaic Law, without the grace of the Gospel: or, thirdly, the works of the ceremonial Law, such as circumcision, sacrifice, and the like: or, fourthly and lastly, all manner of works whatsoever, as far as they are relied on as meritorious causes of our justification or salvation: there being but one only cause of that kind, viz. the meritorious obedience and sufferings of our dear Redeemer and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Of this sort also are the discourses of St. Paul concerning the conflict between the law of the mind, and the law of sin in the members, in the same men^e, and concerning the irrespective love and hatred of Jacob and Esau, and of the obduration or hardening of Pharaoh^d, and of the bondage and redemption of the whole creation^e. And such also is that passage, upon which I shall found my present discourse concerning the witness of the Spirit in the faithful^f; “The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” A passage almost in every man’s mouth, but rightly understood by very few, yea, by too many dangerously mistaken and abused.

In handling whereof I shall endeavour, with all the plainness and clearness I can, to pursue and resolve these two enquiries.

First, How and in what manner the Spirit of God in the faithful doth bear witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God.

Secondly, What degree of hope or persuasion concerning their adoption this witness of the Spirit doth ordinarily produce in the faithful.

I. First then I am to enquire, How and in what manner the Spirit of God in the faithful doth bear witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God.

I answer, first, negatively; not by an immediate oracle, voice, or whisper within them, in express words pronouncing their pardon and acceptance with God, or saying that they are the sons of God, after the manner our Saviour told the man sick of the palsy, “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven

^e Chap. vii.

^d Chap. ix.

^e Chap. viii. 19—22.

^f Chap. viii. 16.

thee^g:" or, as Nathan the Prophet said to David, "The Lord hath put away thy sin^h." This is a vain imagination, and as dangerous as it is vain, it being apt to lead some good men into despair, as not finding any such whisper within them; and to expose others to presumption and the delusion of the evil spirit. Such a vocal testimony of the Spirit is no where promised in Scripture, and therefore not to be expected by us; though it is possible God may to some persons, and in some extraordinary cases, give it. But that St. Paul means not any such vocal testimony of the Spirit is evident from hence, that this vocal testimony would be the immediate testimony of the Spirit alone, whereas the Apostle speaks of a testimony of the Spirit concurring and adjoining with the testimony of our spirits, *i. e.* our minds or consciences; *συμμαρτυρεῖ* our minds and consciences therefore have a part and share in giving this testimony; *i. e.* our consciences give this testimony by and with the Spirit within us. In what manner, I am to shew in the affirmative, to which I proceed.

2. Therefore affirmatively, the Spirit witnesseth that we are the sons of God. (1.) By those gracious fruits and effects which it hath wrought in us, which, when we discern and perceive, we do or may from thence conclude that we are the sons of God, those fruits and effects being the sure badge and livery of His children. (2.) By enlightening our understandings, and assisting the faculties of our souls, as need requires, to discern those gracious fruits and effects which He hath wrought in us.

(1.) The first way whereby the Spirit of God witnesseth that we are the sons of God, is by the gracious fruits and effects which the Spirit hath wrought in us. The Spirit of God in Person is not the immediate suggester of this conclusion, that we are the sons of God; but the Spirit in the fruits and effects of it is the medium or argument from whence we ourselves draw it. St. Paul tells us in the very same chapterⁱ, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Now how shall we know that we have the Spirit, but by the fruits of it in ourselves? And what are the fruits of the Spirit? St. Paul

^g Matt. ix. 2.

^h 2 Sam. xii. 13.

ⁱ Rom. viii. 9.

describes them^k, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.” Where, when among the fruits of the Spirit the Apostle reckons *χαρὰ*, “joy,” the best interpreters understand him to mean, not that joy or peace of conscience, which is the result and reward of duty, but a joy which is itself a duty, and a duty respecting our neighbour; for of that nature are all the rest of the graces there mentioned by St. Paul. For it is immediately subjoined to love, and after it are added several other virtues, which all have reference to our neighbour; and therefore it is altogether improbable that this joy, being placed in the midst of those virtues, should respect any other than our neighbour. And then by “joy,” we must understand either that joy which a man takes in the good things of his neighbour, or that virtue whereby a man studies to create and cause joy to his neighbour, or to gratify and please him in all his actions, for his good and edification. But this by the way. When therefore I find these fruits of the Spirit within me, “love, joy, peace,” &c. I may conclude, that I am the son of God, and accepted by Him; and this comfortable conclusion, though it be made by myself, yet is due to the Spirit of God, from Whom all those gracious arguments of my comfort proceed; and therefore it may well be said to be attested or witnessed by the Spirit of God, in concurrence with my spirit, mind, or conscience.

Thus St. John most plainly expounds St. Paul^l, “Hereby we know that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.” So that the Spirit doth not immediately tell us this, but we come to understand it by perceiving that we have the Spirit, *i. e.* the fruits of the Spirit in us.

Hence the Spirit of God in Scripture is called *ἀρραβὼν*, God’s “earnest^m,” “Who (that is, God) hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” Now an earnest is *pars pretii pro toto spondens*, “part of a sum, given in assurance of receiving the whole afterwards.” So the Spirit of God within us is given us by way of earnest, to assure us that

^k Gal. v. 22, 23.

^m 2 Cor. i. 22.

^l 1 John iv. 13.

in due time we shall receive from God all those other good things, and that full glory and bliss, which He hath promised us; always provided we keep our earnest, and do not throw it back to the Giver, or by resisting the motions of the Spirit, provoke Him to take it again from us. The fruits of the Spirit are also called *σφραγὶς*, God's "seal," in the same place, and likewise Ephesians i. 13, where the Ephesians are said to be "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." In which words St. Paul alludes to the custom of men, who use to set their seals upon those things which they would mark for their own. And thus the fruits of the Spirit are said to be God's seal, because by them we know ourselves to belong to God, and to be in His favour. When therefore we find that we love God above all things, and value His favour more than all the world, and that our greatest care is how we may glorify God and serve Him in this life; that we love our neighbour sincerely, and are ready to do him all the good that lies in our power; that we bear no malice to any man, yea, and can forgive our very enemies; that we are strictly just in all our dealings, and are ready to relieve the distressed according to our abilities; that we study mortification, and to deny our fleshly lusts, and make conscience of every thing we know to be sin; that we delight in religious exercises, especially in prayer; that we have something within us continually crying, *Abba, Father*, and inclining us in all our wants, necessities, and distresses, to have recourse to our God by humble supplication, and to depend and trust on Him for help and relief; and finally, that we can bear afflictions with submission to God's will: by these things, as by the fruits of the Spirit, we know that we have the Spirit, and consequently, that we are the sons of God, and heirs of salvation.

Indeed the Christian's comfort is every where in Scripture founded on those graces and good things which the Spirit of God hath wrought within him. Thus St. Paul most plainly tells us upon what foundation he built the peace, joy, and comfort of his mindⁿ; "Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, we have had our conversation in the world."

ⁿ 2 Cor. i. 12.

The joy and peace of his mind arose from that testimony, which his conscience gave him of his integrity and sincerity. Thus the Spirit of God in the fruits and effects of it did witness with his spirit, that he was a good man, and accepted in the sight of God, *i. e.* a son of God. And the same method of consolation he prescribes to others^o, "Let every man prove his own work, and then he shall have rejoicing in himself." We can have no true and solid joy but what arises from within ourselves, and proceeds from a thorough proof, trial, and examination of our hearts, and finding things right and well there. This matter of comfort, though it be within ourselves, yet is it not of or from ourselves, but is the fruit of the Spirit, an effect of the grace of God; and so the glory of all at last redounds to Him. But still from within ourselves we must fetch our comfort.

They are therefore false apostles and teachers, and betrayers of the souls for whom Christ died, who teach for sound, yea, the only Gospel doctrine, that we are not to seek our consolation from within ourselves, *i. e.* that we are not to fetch our comfort from the graces within us, or the duties performed by us; that this is to dishonour free grace, and to set up our own graces and duties in the room of Christ's righteousness. But as you love your souls, avoid and take heed of these men, and of this doctrine, for it leads to perdition, and hath been, I doubt not, one main cause that hath contributed to the ruin of multitudes of men.

It is true indeed, we are not to build our comfort and hope of salvation upon our graces and duties, as meritorious of salvation. For the only meritorious cause thereof is the obedience, sufferings, and death of our dear Redeemer, and only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Nor are we to take comfort from our graces and duties, as purely our own, *i. e.* as wrought in us, or done by us, merely by our own strength; for we have no strength of our own in spiritual things; but it is God that works in us both to will and to do. Indeed this would be to glory in ourselves, and not in the Lord; to rob God and His grace of their due honour; to fetch our comfort, not from the grace or Spirit of God, but from corrupt nature and the

^o Gal. vi. 4.

powers of it, which whoso doth, let him be "anathema." But to derive our comfort from the graces within us, as the fruits of God's Spirit, freely given us in Christ Jesus, to cherish our hopes by those duties, as conditions without which our Lord Christ hath declared He will never save us, this is not only lawful, but our duty; this we not only may, but must do; and if we seek for solid comfort and peace of conscience in any other way we shall never find it.

And thus I have explained to you the first way whereby the Spirit of God doth witness with our spirits, that we are the sons of God, or in a state of salvation, viz. by those blessed graces and fruits which He works in us.

(2.) The second way by which the Spirit of God witnesseth with our spirits, that we are the sons of God, is by enlightening our understandings and strengthening the powers of our minds, as occasion requires, to discern those gracious fruits and effects which He hath wrought in us. It would be but little comfort to us, that the characters of God's Spirit are written upon our minds, if we ourselves do not arrive to the knowledge of them. Now this is the case of many Christians of great piety, but of weak understandings; they have the fruits of the Spirit flourishing in them, but take no satisfaction from thence, because they do not perceive and discern them. When therefore it is of use and expediency to them, that they should have a better knowledge of themselves, the Spirit of God is pleased to shine upon their understandings, and raise and strengthen the faculties of their souls to an apprehension and lively sense of those graces which He hath wrought in them, that they may receive comfort and satisfaction from them. How and after what manner He doth this, I dare not undertake to tell; but though the manner of it cannot be explained, yet the thing itself is certain, and ought not to be denied.

That Spirit of God, which in the first beginning of things moved upon the face of the great deep, and invigorated the chaos, or dark and confused heap of things, and caused light to shine out of that darkness, can with the greatest ease, when He pleases, cause the light of divine consolation to arise, and shine upon the dark and disconsolate soul. And this He often doth. I may here appeal to the experience of many good

Christians, who sometimes find a sudden joy coming into their minds, enlightening their understandings, dispelling all clouds from thence, warming and enlivening their affections, and enabling them to discern the graces of God shining in their brightness, and to feel them vigorously acting in their souls; so that they have been after a sort transfigured with their Saviour, and wished with St. Peter that they might always dwell on that Mount Tabor.

And indeed we ought, in these happy intervals, when our understandings are thus irradiated and enlightened, to make a judgment of the state and condition of our souls in the sight of God, and not to take our estimate of it when our understandings are eclipsed, and we are overshadowed with a dark cloud of sadness and melancholy.

Thus I have largely shewn the way and manner how the Spirit of God doth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God; viz. 1. By the fruits of the Spirit, or those graces which He works in us. 2. By enlightening our understandings and strengthening the faculties of our minds, if need be, to see and discern those graces, and thence to make a right conclusion concerning our hopes of salvation. Though this latter operation of the Spirit I do not think to be meant by St. Paul, in the passage I have grounded this discourse upon, at least not principally. For he seems to speak of a standing permanent witness of the Spirit, that is always in all the faithful; and that can be no other than the habitual grace of God within them. Whereas that operation of the Spirit, in irradiating our minds to discern the things of God within us, is a transient occasional act, not always to be found in the faithful, but only in their extraordinary exigencies and necessities.

In this way of explanation, and in no other, it is easy to understand the concurrence of God's Spirit and our spirit in this witness or testimony, that we are the sons of God, and so heirs of salvation, and what part each of them hath therein. The Spirit of God hath the main and principal part; for it is that Spirit which produces those graces in us, which are the evidence of our adoption: it is He that, as occasion requires, illuminates our understandings, and assists our memories, in discerning and recollecting those arguments of hope and comfort

within ourselves. But then our spirits or understandings have their share in this testimony too. For God's Spirit *συμ-μαρτυρεῖ*, doth witness, not without, but with our spirits and understandings, so that our spirits concur and cooperate, and act their part in this matter too. How? We make use of our reason and understanding in considering and reflecting upon those grounds of comfort which the Spirit of God hath wrought in us, and from them draw this comfortable conclusion to ourselves, that "we are the sons of God." This witness or testimony is given, not by a direct immediate suggestion, either of God's Spirit or our own, but in a rational and argumentative way. For it being certain from Scripture, that whosoever hath the fruits of the Spirit, or those graces which none but the Spirit of God can work, is in the favour of God; a good Christian, by considering and reflecting on himself, finds that he hath those fruits of the Spirit, and from thence he draws this certain conclusion, that he is in the favour of God.

Thus the witness of the Spirit appears to be not an unaccountable enthusiasm, as some have made it, but a sober rational testimony. The right understanding of this is of great use to settle the minds of many good but weak Christians, who are infinitely perplexed in their thoughts about the witness of the Spirit within them. They sadly complain of their want of it, when indeed they have it, because they do not rightly understand what it is. They expect some secret impulse or suggestion of the Divine Spirit telling them directly that they are "the children of God," and missing of this, (which indeed God hath no where, that I know of, promised,) they are in a disconsolate afflicted condition. They look for comfort only and immediately from the Spirit of God, while their own spirits are wholly inactive and idle; *i. e.* they do not make use of their reason and understanding, in gathering comfort to themselves, from those grounds of comfort which the Spirit of God hath wrought in them.

We may very fitly apply the words of St. Paul, borrowed from Moses concerning the righteousness of faith, to the assurance of faith^p; "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend

^p Rom. x. 6—8.

into heaven? (that is, to bring down Christ from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." So here do not seek after an oracle or immediate revelation, or expect that a voice from heaven should assure thee, that thou who art a true believer, and a sincere penitent, art in a state of grace and favour with God; for the resolution of the case is nigh unto thee, and even within thee, and to be sought after no farther than in thine own heart and conscience. If thou perceivest that thou dost believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thine heart, with a faith working by love, love to God, and love to thy neighbour, thou mayest as certainly conclude thou art in a state of salvation, as if a voice from heaven had told thee so.

And so much of the first thing propounded, The manner how the Spirit of God doth bear witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God.

II. I am next to shew you what degree of hope or persuasion concerning their adoption, the witness of the Spirit doth ordinarily produce in the hearts of the faithful. And here again to this enquiry I answer both negatively and affirmatively.

1. Negatively. The witness of the Spirit doth not ordinarily produce in the faithful that highest degree of persuasion, which amounts to a plerophory or absolute and full assurance of his salvation, excluding all doubt thereof. A full assurance of salvation is that which very few of the best of Christians can boast of. Indeed this seems not expedient in any man but him that is near the end of his race, that having fought a good fight perseveringly against the world, the devil, and the flesh, is now ready to go off the stage, and to take his crown of glory, the reward of his laborious combat; which seems to be the case of St. Paul^a; "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

^a 2 Tim. iv. 6—8.

It is the opinion of very learned interpreters, that St. Paul was warned by an oracle or revelation from heaven of his near approaching martyrdom, after the manner that St. Peter was^r; "Knowing that I must shortly put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." St. Paul being thus "ready to be offered," *i. e.* to suffer martyrdom for Christ's sake, and having, through the whole course of his past life, had experience of the grace of God carrying him through a multitude, an infinite variety of sufferings, with honour and victory, was assured that he should not fail in this last act, but that the same grace would complete his former victories with a crown of martyrdom. This assurance was necessary in him at this time to support him in his last trial, and there was now no danger that he should abuse it. But before this, when the blessed Apostle was farther off from the end of his race and combat, he speaks in a more doubtful manner^s; "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway," *i. e.* a reprobate. St. Paul cannot be supposed at that time, when he wrote this, to be absolutely certain of his salvation. Indeed such an assurance, as I said before, seems no way expedient for any man who is yet in the midst of his combat with the adversaries of his soul, the devil, the world, and the flesh; because it would be apt to betray him to security. The case in this particular is much the same, between the life of our bodies and the salvation of our souls. If Divine Providence should give any man an absolute assurance of a very long life, he would be apt to neglect the means of his health, and to take no care for the preserving of his life: so if God should give a man beforehand assurance of his perseverance to the end, and so of his salvation, it would probably make him careless and negligent in the use of the means appointed for his perseverance, *i. e.* watching and praying.

2. I answer affirmatively. And the affirmative I will lay down in these following propositions.

(1.) The witness of the Spirit of God doth ordinarily produce in the faithful such a degree of hope and persuasion of their adoption, as shall render their lives in some measure

^r 2 Pet. i. 14.

^s 1 Cor. ix. 27.

comfortable, and free from tormenting fears and anxieties, and such as shall be sufficient to encourage them in the discharge of that duty which God requires of them.

(2.) The degrees of this comfortable hope and persuasion in the faithful are ordinarily proportioned to the degrees of their other graces.

The graces of the Spirit within us, as I have already shewn, are the evidences of our titles to heaven: and therefore the greater and stronger our habitual grace is, the greater and stronger evidence we have of our title to glory.

This grace is the great “witness of the Spirit” within us, testifying that we are “the children of God,” and so “heirs of salvation;” and consequently the greater this grace is, the greater and clearer witness we have of our adoption. And, on the contrary, the witness and evidence of our adoption must needs be darker and more obscure, as this grace is weaker and more imperfect in us. And therefore as the characters of the Holy Spirit in our souls are more or less apparent and legible, so will our hope and comfort be greater or lesser.

Indeed sometimes he that hath a lesser degree of grace, may have a greater measure of comfort; because perhaps in the circumstances wherein he is, he needs it; as being under some heavy pressing outward affliction, which, were he not supported by a greater measure of inward comfort, would be apt to sink and crush him. Or perhaps he is a man of a stronger and clearer understanding, or an happier temper and constitution of body, and so better qualified to take comfort from those grounds of comfort that are within him, than another who yet hath arrived to a greater perfection in grace and virtue than himself. But regularly, ordinarily, *et cæteris paribus*, the more grace the more comfort. The more strictly we walk with God in the ways of holiness, the greater will be the peace and satisfaction of our minds. And accordingly we may observe in Scripture a very close connection between hope and holiness. Thus the Holy Ghost, describing the exemplary piety of the primitive Christians, tells us, that they “walked in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost^t.” A seemingly incongruous couple, fear and joy, fear and hope, or comfort. But indeed,

^t Acts ix. 31.

these two are so far from being inconsistent, that they can hardly be separated. The more a man fears to offend God, and the greater his care is to please Him, the greater his hope and comfort will be. The more we fear, the less reason we have to fear; *i. e.* if we fear God, we need not fear any thing else. In this fear we are safe and secure, and all the powers of hell cannot hurt us.

(3.) The Spirit of God doth always administer some degree of hope to all the faithful, so much as is sufficient to keep them from despair.

Some degree of hope is absolutely necessary to preserve the very life and being of our other graces. It is in this sense also the Christian's true motto, *Dum spiro, spero*; "He hopes as long as he lives and breathes." And if ever his hope should utterly fail him, his spiritual life would expire and cease, and all his other graces would languish and die with it. And therefore the Spirit of God never fails to give some degree of hope to all the faithful.

Indeed, it is possible for the hope of a good Christian to be at so very low an ebb, that he may think himself to be in despair, but indeed he is not so; there is some degree of hope still left in him, which, though he himself cannot discern, yet another that is a diligent observer may perceive, in his earnest desire of God's grace and mercy, in the conscience that he still makes of committing any sin that he knows to be such, and his endeavour to do that which he thinks to be his duty to the best of his power, and in his requesting the prayers of good people to God for him. For to what purpose doth he these things, if he were indeed fully resolved in himself that his case is desperate, if he had not some degree of hope yet remaining in him?

Thus some have been known, in a melancholy fit, to think they have lost all faith, and seriously to accuse themselves of downright infidelity, and an utter disbelief of the Articles of the Christian religion, and thereupon have been plunged into horrible fears, perplexities, and agonies of mind; whereas these very fears are a plain demonstration that they are not guilty of that infidelity, the supposal whereof is the cause of their fears. For if they had no belief at all of the matters of religion, they could not be so much troubled for their unbelief. For how can

a man possibly be troubled for not believing that, which he is fully resolved and really persuaded in his own mind is false, and so ought not to be believed?

In like manner some men think themselves void of all hope, and that they are guilty of utter despair, when their own actions at the same time plainly declare the contrary. But yet to be thus next door to despair is a very sad condition, though it may be safe. And, God be thanked, the instances of good men in this pitiable estate are comparatively very rare. And where they are found, it commonly appears that much of their misery is to be attributed to an excess of melancholy in their natural temper and constitution; and much to the false notions of religion which they have imbibed and sucked in from those unlicensed, unlearned, ignorant, or corrupt teachers, which perhaps, through their own wantonness and folly, they made choice of. But still the hand of God is to be acknowledged in the case, permitting them at least by such means to fall into the heaviest of afflictions and calamities in this world, for reasons best known unto Himself, always wise, just, and righteous, and, as it will appear in the issue, good and gracious too.

Obj. But here it may be objected, How is the ease of these disconsolate Christians consistent or reconcileable with this truth, "That the Spirit of God beareth witness with the spirit of the faithful," &c. For whereas St. Paul, manifestly speaking of all true Christians, all that have the Spirit of God in general, saith, that "the Spirit doth bear witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God;" these afflicted persons, whom we suppose to be true Christians, are so far from having any such thing witnessed to them, as that they are the children of God, that on the contrary they are under dreadful apprehensions of their being reprobates and castaways.

Ans. I answer, That this passage is, as many other places of Scripture of the like nature are, to be understood, not so much of the certainty or necessity of the effect itself spoken of, as of the nature of the thing, to which that effect is attributed, and its sufficiency to produce it, if not hindered by some obstacle intervening. Thus, for instance, the Gospel of Christ is every where in Scripture described as a Gospel of peace, and which should cause an universal peace in the world; because, though

through the corruption of men, it too generally fails of that blessed effect, yet in its own nature it is apt and fitted to produce it, and would do so, if its most strict precepts of peace and love, and most powerful motives and arguments to enforce that excellent virtue, were duly regarded and attended to. So here the Spirit, *i. e.* the fruits and graces of the Spirit within us, are said to testify and witness to and with "our spirits, that we are the children of God;" because in themselves wherever they are, they are a sufficient evidence of our adoption; and if by this Spirit we are not actually assured of it, it is because our own spirits are not rightly fitted and disposed to receive that evidence. So that all true Christians, even those disconsolate ones, have in themselves "the witness of the Spirit," which St. Paul speaks of, *i. e.* they have that habitual grace, which is a certain argument or testimony of their being "the children of God;" but they do not at present discern it, through the weakness and indisposition of their minds, and too often of their bodies also; which indisposition the good and gracious God will some time or other, sooner or later, remove: and the same Divine Spirit, which implanted that grace in them, will in due time illuminate their understandings, to perceive and see that blessed work of God within themselves.

And now to conclude this discourse: the best advice that can be given upon the whole matter is this; Let us carefully mind our duty which the word of God hath laid before us, and then leave our comfort to our good and gracious God, who will certainly dispense it in such measure as He sees best and fittest for us. There is many a one who might have been in a much more comfortable state of mind than he is, if he had minded his comfort less and his duty more; if he had studied more the pleasing of God, than the pleasure, peace, and satisfaction of his own mind; if he had laboured more to be a true obedient child of God, than to know that he is so. Do not therefore, as the manner of some is, lie down whining and crying for comfort and assurance, in the mean while neglecting thy duty; but rise up in the name and strength of God, and set thyself in good earnest to thy duty; honestly study to know and do the will of God; take heed of defiling thy conscience with any wilful sin; call upon God for His grace by constant and daily prayer; and

in this way of well-doing commit thy soul to the goodness and mercy of God in Christ Jesus; and whilst thou dost so, be assured thou art safe, and canst never miscarry. For it is as certain that God is good and gracious, as that He is, and that therefore He will never cast off those who thus cast themselves upon Him. Remember that ordinarily an abundant comfort is the reward of a fruitful piety, and therefore endeavour to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ^u.”

In a word, persist and persevere in thy duty, and thou canst not fail of that comfort which is convenient for thee; and to be sure, what is wanting in thy joy and comfort here, shall with infinite advantage be made up hereafter, in that “fulness of joy, and those pleasures which are at God’s right hand for evermore.”

^u 2 Pet. iii. 18.

DISCOURSE IV.

THE CONSUBSTANTIALITY AND CÔETERNITY OF THE SON OF GOD WITH GOD THE FATHER, ASSERTED; OR, SOME FEW ANIMADVERSIONS ON A TREATISE OF MR. GILBERT CLERKE, ENTITLED, ANTE-NICENISMUS; SO FAR AS THE SAID AUTHOR PRETENDS TO ANSWER DR. G. BULL'S DEFENCE OF THE NICENE FAITH, &c.

Animadversions on the Preface.

THE author in his Preface gives a summary, but clear, account of his opinion, and in a much better method than he has observed in the Treatise itself; where, having in the first place taken notice, "that the Trinitarians of all kinds, and of whatsoever Church, whether Protestants, or Papists, assert with great confidence, and would be thought firmly to believe, that they have all the Fathers; from the times of the Apostles and downwards, on their side, in the article of the Trinity;" hereupon subjoins, "That the Unitarians, who hold with Socinus, are the only persons that have ingenuity enough openly to profess, that the ancient writers do not wholly concur with them, and do therefore fly to the Holy Scriptures as their only refuge. And yet they justly value themselves upon it, that the Doctors of the three first centuries held the Father alone, and none else, to be that Supreme God, above Whom there is none other God, and so were of the same opinion with themselves."

Whereto I answer, that those early Doctors of the Church, as I have often noted in my former writings, did by way of distinction commonly call God the Father, as He is the Father, and the Head and Fountain of the Divinity, the "Supreme," or "Most High" God, and even the "One" God. But I have

also observed, at the same time, that these same Fathers nevertheless did constantly acknowledge the true and undoubted Divinity of the Son of God, as has been fully declared in the fourth section of my Defence of the Nicene Faith, concerning the Son's Subordination to the Father, as to His Source and Original^a. Where I have shewn at large, that not only the ante-Nicene Fathers, but all their successors likewise, and the very schoolmen confessed that subordination. And in the Nicene Creed itself, composed against the Arians, this same subordination is freely enough declared. For so that Confession begins, "We believe in one God the Father Almighty," &c. Yet it presently follows, "and in one Jesus Christ, born of the Father, the only-begotten, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God," &c. So that the author of Ante-Nicenisimus betrays his own either ignorance or impudence, when^b he writes thus; "I find that Dr. Bull in his fourth section, *De Subordinatione*, has given me up a great part of the question." For I have given up nothing in the fourth section, but what all Catholics have always granted; nothing that may be of any advantage to the cause either of the Socinians or of the Arians. The first position of that section, on which those that follow have their dependence, is this, "That decree of this Council of Nice, wherein it is determined that the Son of God is God of God, has had the consent and approbation of the Catholic Doctors who have written, both before, and after that Council. For they have all taught with one mouth, that the Divine nature and perfections belong to the Father and the Son, not collaterally, or by way of coordination, but subordinately; as much as to say, the Son has one and the same Divine nature with the Father, but communicated by the Father; namely, so as that the Father alone has that Divine nature of Himself, or from none else, but the Son has it from the Father; whence the Father is the Fountain, Source, and Original of the Divinity that is in the Son." Let Mr. Clerke and his party once confess, that the Son has the same Divine nature in common with the Father, and we Catholics will have no farther controversy with them.

Immediately after, in his Preface, he adds, "Moreover they

^a Chap. i. ii.

^b P. 78.

have learned from Eusebius^c, and others, That a great number, if not the majority, of the Bishops in the two first centuries, had taught that Christ as to His Essence was but man; and throughout those ages the simple truth might be safely discovered to a people that were inquisitive after it, without the charge of that horrible guilt of blasphemies, which later writers, out of a wicked zeal, not to say cunning craftiness, have thundered against them without blushing. But that most foolish pretence of the Artemonites, I have largely confuted and exploded, in my late disputation against Daniel Zuicker, &c. whereto I refer the reader.

And again, in the same Preface, he has had the confidence to write, "That any Son of God was begotten before all ages, not to say from all eternity, is what all [the Unitarians] do with one accord deny, they do also with one accord profess continually to dispute against those primitive Divines, even before the Council of Nice, who have taken up their notions concerning the Son of God, not from the Scriptures, but from their own imaginations, and the school of Plato, and have obtruded it, thus unhappily taken up, as matter of faith to the people; forasmuch as the Church being adorned and furnished with philosophical Doctors, by their unhappy assistance, did hereupon depart from the simplicity of the faith, according to the Divine predictions. Justin Martyr valued himself upon his skill in the Platonic philosophy^d. And in his second Apology he pleads, that Plato had learned of Moses, that the whole frame of the universe was made and formed by the Word of God. Thus," says he, "these men put on Christ, but in such a manner, as however not to put off Plato." Let the understanding reader observe the countenance and singular impudence of the man. He is not ashamed openly to avow, that he and his companions do, and that continually, contradict, not only the present Catholic Church, but also the Divines of the first ages. He does not stick most abominably to slander those holy men, of whom even the greater part sealed the Christian faith with their blood, as though they had embraced their notion of the Son of God, not from the Scriptures, but from their own imaginations, and what they had been taught in

^c Lib. v. c. 28.^d Apol. i.

Plato's school, and what themselves had thus unluckily embraced, they obtruded upon the people as an article of faith; that is to say, he represents these venerable persons, as a sort of wicked innovators, and sacrilegious corrupters of the Christian faith; and this in its principal and main article. And as to what he talks of Platonism, and of Justin Martyr, as introducing it into the Church, I have clearly shewn the vanity of it, in the forenamed dissertation against Zuicker, &c.

Presently after, this author of Ante-Niceneism proceeds thus, "Yet the plain Christian truth was not thus vilely depraved all at once. For the Unitarians have made it evident from undoubted testimonies of the Fathers, that the opinion of the ante-Nicene Doctors, was either throughly Arian, or very near being so, unquestionably nearer to the error whereinto Arius had fallen, than to the fancies of the schoolmen, or, which is all one, to the decreitory articles of our modern Homoeousians." Here I would fain know what it is the Unitarians have made appear from the undoubted testimonies of the Fathers. Is it that the opinion of the ante-Nicene Doctors was perfectly Arian? He dares by no means stand to this assertion, and therefore presently subjoins, "or like that of the Arians." And still he is uncertain, and for this cause adds, "unquestionably nearer to the error whereinto Arius had fallen, than to the fancies of the schoolmen," &c. But I do affirm, it is plain from undoubted testimonies of the ante-Nicene Doctors, that their belief was neither Arian, nor like it, but manifestly contrary to that of the Arians. For they all acknowledged the consubstantiality of the Son, which is diametrically opposite to the Arian hypothesis. This I have evidently shewn in my Defence of the Nicene Faith. This is owned by Petavius himself, by whom the Unitarians have been taught to vent this slander of the Fathers of the first ages. Nevertheless the author of Ante-Niceneism has learned of Curcelleus to make this objection, That the ancient Doctors who acknowledged the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, meant nothing more by it, than that the Essence of the Father, and of the Son, is specifically the same.

I answer; Supposing it were so, this would never prove the belief of the ante-Nicene Fathers was either Arian or like it.

For in truth, as concerning the specific unity of Persons in the blessed Trinity, such as is the union of subsistences, or persons amongst things created, (for instance, of three men, Peter, Paul, and John, which are distinct from one another, and do not any way depend upon each other as to their essence,) this the Fathers of the first ages never dreamed of. They acknowledged a very different union of the Divine Persons, such as that there is no pattern of it, no likeness whereby to illustrate it, to be found in the whole creation. They thus explain the matter, that God the Father is, as I said, the Head and Fountain of the Divinity, from Whom the Son and Spirit are derived, but in such a manner, that they are not divided from the subsistence of the Father, but are in the Father, and the Father is in them, by a certain *περιχώρησις*, “inexistence,” or “inhabitation” so called. As may be seen more largely in the Defence of the Nicene Faith^e. Petavius himself argues, That from this inhabitation a numerical unity may be effected^f. And it is certainly manifest, that this explication can no way consist with the Arian hypothesis. It is also manifest, that this explication has nothing to do with Tritheism, and that the Unity does consist with it, without prejudice to the real distinction of Persons. Which has been observed by the Roman Synod, held under their Bishop Dionysius, in the cause of Dionysius of Alexandria, who was accused by some of the Church of Pentapolis, of denying the consubstantiality of the Son of God. For the Fathers in that Council, having first severely checked the introducers of Tritheism for mangling and dividing the holy Unity into three strange hypostases, perfectly separate from each other, afterwards subjoin this reason of their accusation. “For it is necessary that the Divine Word be united to the God of all. As also the Holy Ghost must abide and dwell in God. And indeed it is highly necessary that the holy Trinity be collected and joined together in one as the Head, I mean the Almighty God of all things.” This explication was always accounted orthodox in the Church of Christ, unto the days of Damascene, who, Lib. iii. of *The Orthodox Faith*^g, discourses thus of the Divine Persons; “We know that they cannot

^e Sect. 4. c. 4.^g C. 5.^f *De Trinitate*, lib. iv. c. 16.

depart or be separated from each other, and are united, and dwell in one another without confusion, so that they are united without confusion, (for they are three though united,) and are distinguished without separation. For though each Person subsists by itself, or is a perfect subsistence, and has its own property, that is, a different manner of existing, yet are they united in their essence and natural properties. And inasmuch they are not separated, nor do withdraw from the subsistence of the Father, they both are, and are said to be, one God." That this inhabitation is a great mystery, fitter for our religious adoration, than to be curiously enquired into, I have hinted in the end of my Defence of the Nicene Faith. And what I have there said concerning it, I would beg the reader to overlook again and again, and especially that he would get by heart those words of the most learned Athenagoras, fit to be written in letters of gold, with which that book concludes^h.

But what this author of Ante-Niceneism a little after affirms in this Preface, is very surprising. For he tells us, "The Nicene Fathers determine the Son to be begotten of the Essence of the Father, ("begotten," says he, "I say, not created,") yet begotten before all ages, but not coeternal with the Father." Yet it is apparent that the Nicene Fathers owned the coeternity of the Son, from the anathema annexed to their Creed, wherein they condemn those who said of the Son, "that there was a time when He was not." For if the Son is not coeternal with the Father, the Arians had reason for their assertion, that "there was a time when He was not." However, says he immediately after, these same Fathers decreed the Son to be "of the same Essence with the Father, but by no means coequal with Him." Weakly enough; for if the Son be of the same Essence with the Father, He must inevitably be equal to the Father, as to His nature and essence; which is all the equality of the Son that the Catholics pretend to maintainⁱ.

^h Θεὸν καὶ τὸν παρ' αὐτοῦ λόγον εἰδέναι, τίς ἡ τοῦ παιδὸς πρὸς τὸν πατέρα ἐνότης, τίς ἡ τοῦ πατρὸς πρὸς τὸν υἱὸν κοινωνία, τί τὸ πνεῦμα, τίς ἡ τῶν τρισούτων ἑνωσις, καὶ διαίρεσις, ἐνομένων τοῦ πνεύματος, τοῦ παιδὸς, τοῦ πατρὸς. To know God, and the Word that is from Him, what is the Unity of the

Son with the Father, what is the Father's communication to the Son, what the Spirit, what is the union and distinction of the united Spirit, and Son and Father.

ⁱ See the Defence of the Nicene Faith. Sect. iv. c. 2.

Animadversions on the Treatise itself.

IN the examination of the Preface, I have already shaken the main strength of the following Treatise, by removing that objection, which runs through the whole discourse of the author of Ante-Niceneism, and which he every where sets as a Gorgon's head, against the testimonies of the ante-Nicene Doctors, which I have alleged for the consubstantiality and coeternity of the Son. The objection he most plainly lays down^k in these words, "If I should grant the most learned Dr. G. Bull both the consubstantiality, and the coeternity, though this would satisfy the title of his book, and his defence of the Council, (perhaps more than enough as to the coeternity,) yet could not the Doctor be thought to have fully performed his undertaking; for whatsoever the title-page pretends to, it is apparent that the Doctor does every where level his darts against the Unitarians, with respect to their denial of Christ's being the Supreme God, and having the same numerical Essence with the Father; which, unless Dr. Bull believed, even he also would be called heretic by the Autotheists and other Catholics, in like manner as he may be called a semi-Arian by such zealots, as believe that none, not even the least inferiority, or minority, can be inferred in any respect, from the order that is between them." How the ancient Catholic Doctors (with whom I hold) did by way of distinction call God the Father the Supreme God, without prejudice to the true Divinity of the Son of God; what union of Persons they believed in the blessed Trinity, I have fully and clearly shewn. And it is apparent enough, that I have nothing to fear from those called Autotheists, seeing I have openly and barefaced set myself to confute them^l. Nor am I at all concerned for those zealots, who are wont to talk rashly of things they do not understand. I always loved Truth above all things, and have sought it with true sincerity of heart, and a freedom from the bias of affections, (and I hope by God's grace have found it,) not in the labyrinths of the schoolmen, nor the systems of modern authors, (though I have never wholly slighted the works either of the one, or of the other, but ever conceived they might be

^k Ante-Nicen. p. 100.^l Defence of the Nicene Faith, Sect. 4, l. §. 7, 8.

read with profit,) but in the Holy Scriptures, understood, to use the language of Vincentius Lirinensis^m, according to the sense of the Catholic Church. But of this sufficiently.

It would be too long a task to discover all the frauds, arts, and windings of this author. And accordingly, I shall only take notice of some of the principal of them, and this too but very briefly. He has hammered out a distinction concerning the sense of the words “high” and “low,” which he does not fail to make use of, for evading some of the more famous testimonies of the ancients produced by me. Thus, for instance, as to that remarkable passage of Clement of Alexandriaⁿ; “Who is most manifestly God, Who is made equal with the Lord of the universe, because He was His Son, and was the Word in God.” “The force,” saith he, “of the argument lies in the word ἐξισωθεὶς, *made equal*.” Then he answers^o, “First in general, There is no need that this equality be entirely complete, in the higher sense, such as the doctrine of Athanasius requires.” But what does the sophister mean by those words “entirely complete?” Does he intend an equality also as to his original? But such an equality is not what the doctrine of the Athanasians requires. For neither Athanasius, nor any one of the ancients, did ever deny the preeminence of God the Father, as He is the Original and Fountain of the Divinity. And it is therefore impertinently enough that he answers, in the next page, to this testimony of Clement; “Clement expressly distinguishes the *Word* from the Father, as Lord of the universe; which words, by Dr. Bull’s own confession, assert an eminence and prerogative to the Father, that is, say I, that the Son is not the Supreme God.” Here Clement speaks of an equality of nature, and he most manifestly teaches it to be exactly the same. For he says, “the Word is most manifestly the true God.” Can these words possibly be understood in a lax or lower sense? How could it be, that Clement could contrive to express “the highest and strictest sense” more significantly? Besides, Clement proves the Word is most manifestly the true God, for this reason, because He is the Son of God, and exists in God. The force of which reason lies apparently

^m Adv. Hæres. c. 2.

^o P. 94.

ⁿ Protrept. p. 68.

in this, that every son is of the same nature and essence with his father, and that whatsoever exists in God Himself, must necessarily be very God. But what does Mr. Clerke mean by adding these words in the same place^p? “Moreover Dr. Bull does not collect from his authors, that this equality is to be understood of the Person, and not of the Divine Nature, but either for supporting his cause, or forced by necessity, fixes it upon them, by a distinction invented long after the death of those authors.” Does he design by this, that not one of those who lived before Clement, ever taught the Son of God to be of the same nature with His Father, and so be equal to God the Father in respect of His nature, and yet at the same time that the Son is in some respect inferior to God the Father, namely, as He is the second Person, and has His original from God the Father? If so, I must tell him that the Fathers, who lived before and after Clement, taught both the one and the other; and that I have clearly shewn they did, in my Defence of the Nicene Faith^q. What follows in his answer to this passage of Clement^r, argues him guilty, either of impudence, or at least of most gross negligence in reading my book. He tells us, “The reason assigned by Clement, and alleged by Sandius, that is, His being the Son of God, makes good his assertion; inasmuch as every son, as such, is less than his father, nor would the Gentiles, to whom Clement writes, understand this reason otherwise. To which reason of Sandius, Dr. Bull has made no answer.” Than which nothing can be more false, for I have largely answered that foolish objection^s.

When he finds he cannot with any colour use that distinction of a higher and lower sense, for weakening the force of any testimony produced by me, he has recourse to that desperate refuge of changing the Author's text, though without the authority of any either printed or manuscript copy on his side. Thus, for instance, to that famous saying of Clement^t, which I had cited^u, “He can want nothing, who has THE WORD, THE ALMIGHTY GOD; nor does he ever lack any of those things which are needful for him. For THE WORD is a possession

^p P. 94.^q Sect. 4. c. 2.^r P. 95.^s Sect. 4. c. 2. §. 4.^t Pædag. c. 7.^u Defence, &c. sect. 2. c. 6. §. 4.

that has nothing wanting to it, and which is the foundation of all plenty." To this saying of Clement, I say, the author of Ante-Niceneism thus answers^x; "The most remarkable place cited from Clement by Dr. Bull, is *Pædag.* l. 3. c. 7. ἀνευδεὴς γὰρ ὁ τὸν παντοκράτορα Θεὸν Λόγον ἔχων^y, &c. 'He can want nothing who has the Word, the Almighty God.' Which passage, written by the Doctor in capital letters, a small alteration would rectify, that is to say if it were written in the genitive case τοῦ παντοκράτορος Θεοῦ. And unless some such error of the scribe be admitted, I may safely affirm the word *Almighty* to have been impudently foisted in by some impostor." Whereto I reply, That that small alteration of the text is not to be borne, not only as having no manuscript copy to countenance it, but moreover because that alteration, as small as it is, would quite ruin the sense of the author. Clement's sense is apparently this, That he who has the Word can want nothing, because that Word is God Almighty, Who can do all things for those who are His, and Who as Almighty God is the Cause of all plenty.

Again, he demands of me, and appeals to my conscience, where I have ever found, that any ancient Doctor ever called Christ by the name of God Almighty? I answer, Tertullian calls Him by that name, and in that very place which he himself presently refers to, though he durst not recite the whole. Against Praxeas^z, "The names of the Father, God Almighty, the Most High, the Lord of Hosts, the King of Israel, Who is, as the Scriptures teach. These we say belong to the Son likewise, and that the Son came in these, and always acted in them, and so manifested them in Himself to men. 'All that the Father hath,' saith He, 'is Mine;' why then not His names? Wherefore when thou readest Almighty God, and the Most High, and the Lord of Hosts, and the King of Israel, and He Who is; consider whether the Son be not demonstrated hereby; Who is IN HIS OWN RIGHT GOD ALMIGHTY, AS HE IS THE WORD OF ALMIGHTY GOD." These words of Tertullian, the author of Ante-Niceneism impudently, as his manner is, refers to Christ as He is "exalted at the right hand of God." Nor

^x P. 82.^z C. 7.^y D. B. p. 145.

does he stick to affirm, that from this very place "it plainly appears, that Tertullian in his Treatise against Praxeas (which Dr. Bull commends and urges in favour of the consubstantiality) did not believe Christ to be Almighty God." Certainly the sense of Tertullian, in the place cited, is most manifestly, that CHRIST AS HE IS THE NATURAL SON OF GOD THE FATHER, and as He is His Word, (the Word that exists in Him,) has all things that God the Father hath, and so all the essential attributes of God the Father belong to Him, and among the rest the attribute of God Almighty.

With the same confidence he labours to elude that notable place of Irenæus^a; "Thou art not unmade, O man, nor didst thou always coexist with God, as His own Word has done." On which place he has this note^b, "It would not seem absurd (were there any need of it) to expound these words, by understanding [God] to whom Irenæus is wont to join the Word: as much as to say, Thou, O man, art not unmade, as God is, nor didst thou always coexist with God, as His nearest Word." Whereas it is most apparent, that each branch of this sentence of Irenæus, namely [neither art thou unmade] and [neither didst thou always coexist with God] ought to be referred to the same, the Word of God. I add farther, though the former branch, "neither art thou unmade," were expunged, the case would yet remain the same, and the Word of God unmade, that is, that He was not made, nor a creature, would be sufficiently signified by the other part of the sentence, "nor didst thou always coexist with God, as His Word" has done. Forasmuch as in those words the coeternal existence of the *Λόγος*, or "Word," with God the Father is so declared, that it necessarily follows, that the Word is in no wise to be reckoned amongst the things that are made by God, or His creatures. It is moreover to be observed, that Mr. Clerke follows the corrupt and absurd reading of Erasmus and Gallasius, by putting *proximum*, "nearest," for *proprium*, "his own," against the authority of more manuscripts, and those of the best note^c.

Besides, it is to be observed, That Mr. Clerke, in his answer

^a Adv. Hæc. l. ii. c. 13.

^b P. 135.

^c See the note of our most learned
Grabe upon the place.

to The Testimony of the Ancients, cited by me, almost constantly conceals the chief arguments, whereby I establish those testimonies; as also sometimes the objections, which I have clearly confuted, are brought in afresh, as if they had been silyly passed over, and not a word said to them. Thus, for example^d, to the testimonies of Justin for the consubstantiality of the Son, being to give his answer, he only carps at the similes which the good man used for the illustration of his assertions, though such as no one in his senses could think to quadrate in all points. Concerning this the candid reader may please to consult, what has been said in the Defence^e, and there he will see that not only Justin acknowledged the truth of the consubstantiality of the Son, but likewise that the doctrine of the production of the Son of the Essence and Substance of God the Father, was an opinion received, fixed, settled, and established in the Catholic Church in his age; and that the heretics of those times opposed that doctrine, with the same cavils that the Arians and other heretics made use of afterwards; and, lastly, that the Catholics of Justin's age overthrew that sophism by the very same answer, that the Catholic Doctors after Arius's controversy raised about the consubstantiality, urged for stopping the mouths of the Arians. So as to what he objects from Tertullian^f, saying "a portion of the Divinity," that God the Father "could not be included in a place," and that "He is invisible," that the Son "appeared in a place, and is visible," I have answered all this in a particular manner, in the Defence^g: that all these things Mr. Clerke passes over in silence: however, I dare confidently appeal to Mr. Clerke's conscience, whether in good earnest he believes Tertullian did really think God the Father and the Son, to be of such a different nature, that the one should be an imperfect, the other perfect God, that one might be included in a place, the other not, as also that the one is visible, the other invisible. The express testimonies of Tertullian, alleged by me^h, concerning the consubstantiality of the Son, are contrary to this. I will say it for once, that I request this one thing of the candid

^d P. 101.^e Sect. 2. c. 1. §. 4.^f P. 111—113.^g Sect. 2. c. 7. §. 1. 5; and sect. 4.^c 3. §. 89.^h Defence, §. 2. c. 7.

reader, (nor is my desire unreasonable,) that he do not rashly give his assent to Mr. Clerke's affirmations, in his answer to my book, without consulting the places themselves which he professes to answer.

Mr. Clerke, in his answer to my book, handles matters confusedly, preposterously, and without observing any method. The chief heads that are yet behind, I shall briefly note, as they come in my way. P. 78. When he begins to dispute against me, you may read these words: "Let us first treat of Clement, whom Dr. Bull proves to be a Trinitarian, because he calls Christ 'God,' and 'the great God;' as if the Unitarians themselves did not acknowledge Christ to be God, and indeed the great God; yea, according to Rom. ix. 5; 'over all, God blessed for ever.'" Now that Clemens Alexandrinus was a Trinitarian, I prove, not only from Christ's being called by him "God," and "the great God," but from many other most clear testimonies cited in the Defenceⁱ. One illustrious testimony I have produced above, and have vindicated it from the frivolous exceptions of Mr. Clerke. But who can read without indignation, what Mr. Clerke says; that he and his Unitarians own Christ to be "God," and indeed "the great God;" yea, according to Rom. ix. 5; "over all, God blessed for ever?" That is to say, the Unitarians own Christ to be God, but a made God, such as is a mere creature, such as had no existence before His birth of the Virgin. O great God!

Again, p. 79. and the two following, are spent in a long explication, or perversion rather, of that noble text of St. Paul. To which explication of his, may be opposed what I have written in the Defence^k. Where I have shewn, that all the Fathers, even those before the Nicene Council, whensoever they have had occasion to cite the text, have both read and understood it, as it is now read and understood by the present Catholics.

P. 84. He insists upon a passage of Clement^l, cited before him by Petavius, and which I have already examined in the Defence^m, in which passage are these words, ἡ υἱοῦ φύσις τῷ μόνῳ παντοκράτορι προσεχυστάτη, "The Person of the

ⁱ §. 2. c. 6.

^k Sect. 2. c. 5. §. 3.

^l Strom. l. vii. p. 702.

^m Sect. 2. c. 6. §. 6.

Son," for so φύσις is used in other places, "is most intimately united to the Almighty," that is, to God the Father. And for answer to what I have said to that passage, he replies, that "Dr. Bull, to evade the force of the place cited, would have προσεχესτάτη rendered rather by *conjunctissima*, 'most intimately united,' than by *propinquissima*, 'nearest.' Which, if it signifies any thing, makes for me. For by how much the more intimately the second Person is united to the first, so much the more magnificent titles may be attributed to Him; but withal, as the *second* Person is not the *first*, how intimately soever united to Him; so, by consequence, neither is the Λόγος, 'the Word,' God Almighty, notwithstanding His most intimate union with Him." Whereto I have returned answer, That ὁ παντοκράτωρ, "the Almighty," in the place mentioned, denotes God the Father, Who, as He is the Fountain of the Divinity, is in a more eminent manner called the Almighty God, by Clement and other ancient writers. Now I readily confess the WORD, though the nearest and most intimately united to God the Father, yet is not God the Father; nay, inasmuch as He is said to be next, or most intimately united (for it is no great matter whether of these ways the word προσεχესτάτη be translated) is manifestly distinguished from God the Father. In the mean time, I have a little above clearly shewn, that the Word as He is begotten of that same Almighty God the Father, (the perfect Word born of the perfect Father, as Clement himself speaks^p;) may be called, and is, God Almighty. Yet Mr. Clerke in his Tract repeats this place of Clement over and over, and makes great boast of it, and after Petavius's example, infers from it, that this most learned Father was of opinion with the Arians, or at least with the semi-Arians, that the nature of the Son of God is next, or most like to that of the Father, but not the same with it. But as to this, let the impartial reader consult, and seriously weigh with himself, the several places cited out of Clement, in my Defence of the Nicene Faith^q, but especially that noble Doxology at the end of his Pædagogus, mentioned in §. 4. of that chapter. And then let him believe, if he can, that Clement did not acknowledge the consubstantiality of the Son. Wherefore is it not

^p Pædag. l. i. c. 6. p. 92.

^q Sect. 2. c. 6.

better to take the word *φύσις* personally in the place of Clement now under consideration, as Photius and even Petavius himself have observed it to have been taken by other Fathers^r?

In the same page, Mr. Clerke observes of the primitive Fathers, that they “very frequently speak of the Son of God, as of the Minister of the Father, and obedient to Him.” And a little after he produces other places, especially from Irenæus, which look that way. But I have amply answered those places upon Petavius’s allegation of them^s, where I have also clearly made it out, that in those places such things are spoken by Irenæus, as savour so little of Arianism, that they are totally subversive of the doctrine of Arius. Let the impartial reader see what I have said there, and then let him judge. The next page but one he brings a place out of Origen^t, against Celsus, where Adamantius says, “The immediate Maker of the world was the Son of God, the Word, Who built the world as it were by Himself; but that the Father by reason of His commanding His Son and Word to make the world, was therefore prime Maker of it.” Yet he knows I have already considered this place at large, as being cited by Petavius, and have apparently made out, that nothing is said in it, but what other Catholics, both ante-Nicene, and post-Nicene, have said, nothing that fairly interpreted is unagreeable to the rule of faith, as it is delivered and explained by the Nicene Fathers^u.

In the same page Mr. Clerke proceeds in this manner: “I thank Dr. Bull for supplying me with two testimonies, and those irrefragable ones; the former out of Eusebius, in praise of Constantine, c. 11. *Ἐπεὶ γὰρ*, &c. ‘Because it could not be, that the transient substance of bodies, and the nature of rational creatures already born into the world, should approach God the chief Governor of all things, because at an infinite distance from Him—parted and separated to the utmost degree, from that unbegotten nature. It was not therefore without cause, that the infinitely good and great God, has interposed an intermediate divine and almighty power of His only-

^r See the Defence of the Nicene Faith, sect. 2. c. 9. §. 11.

^s Defence, sect. 2. c. 5. §. 5—7.

^t L. vi.

^u See the Defence, sect. 2. c. 9. §. 10.

begotten Word, which might most perfectly and nearly converse with God the Father.—Yet, nevertheless, He graciously condescends, and in some sort disposes and adapts Himself to those things that are vastly off from His sublime height. And, in truth, the WORD is at a distance, but not so great an one from the height.’ But what does Dr. Bull answer to these things? He answers, p. 392; ‘That Eusebius manifestly teaches that the power of the Word is of a middle sort betwixt God and the creatures, not as considered in itself, but because of that condescension he speaks of.’” Where this sophister gives a lame and imperfect relation of my answer^x. I first noted as to that place of Eusebius, that he “manifestly teaches that the power of the Word is of a middle sort betwixt God and the creatures, not as considered in itself, but because of the condescension he speaks of. Indeed he expressly teaches that the power of the Word, even when He thus humbles Himself, does most perfectly and nearly converse with God the Father, and abiding in Him, does more ineffably enjoy His secrets, in like manner as Athanasius says, ‘The Word Himself does not so condescend, but that He always remains the unalloyed splendour of the Father.’” And presently after I add: “But the words of Eusebius in this same Oration in praise of Constantine”, put this matter beyond all controversy, whilst subtilely philosophizing upon the number of Three, he says, Thereby is signified the Holy Trinity, that is to say, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Whose nature is equal, and alike uncreated, and without beginning.” His words are these, *Πρώτη δὲ τριὰς*, &c. “The number of the three first shewed justice, teaching equality, as having equal beginning, middle, and end. And these are a representation of the mystical, most holy, and majestic Trinity; which, consisting of a nature that had no original or production, contains in it the seeds, reasons, and causes of all things that have been produced.” What, I pray, could ever be more effectually than this, or more expressly urged by any Catholic, against Arius, and the other Antitrinitarians?

P. 88. Thus speaks the author of Ante-Niceneism; “Dr. Bull cites the words of that same Alexander, whose Presbyter

^x See Defence, sect. 3, c. 9. §. 11.

^y C. 7.

Arius was, cited also by Schlictingius^z. The illiterate and ignorant do not understand the great difference betwixt the unbegotten Father, and the things created by Him out of nothing, whether rational, or void of reason; betwixt which two comes in the middle, the only-begotten nature of the Word of God, by which the Father made all things out of nothing, and it is begotten of the very true Father. These words, as Dr. Bull says, need no commentator." Falsely and impudently, as his manner is! I did not say this place of Alexander needs no commentator; on the contrary^a, I made use of a commentator who best knew Alexander's meaning, and that was Alexander himself, who in the same place, after not many words interposed, adds, "No one knows the Father but the Son, and no one knows the Son but the Father. This Son we have learnt to be above all alteration and change in like manner as the Father, that He wants nothing, but is perfect and like the Father, inferior to Him only in this, that He is not unbegotten; for He is the most exact image of the Father, and differing from Him in nothing." I said these words are so clear and express, as to need no commentator. And now I add: He that wrote thus could not say in the same sense with Arius, that the Son of God comes in the middle, betwixt God and the creatures.

Again, says Mr. Clerke, that "to the end I might seem to say something, I was pleased here to take nature for person." And I confess, in the margin of my book, with respect to that place of Alexander, where it is said, "The only begotten nature of the Word of God coming in the middle," I have written thus, "he takes nature for person; for he understands φύσιν ἐν ὑποστάσει, the nature in the subsistence, as Valesius had noted before upon the place." You see the note is not mine, but the most learned Valesius's, who also confirmed it out of Alexander's own words, not far from the place referred to. But this our worthless author concealed from his reader.

P. 90. Mr. Clerke, to a passage cited by me^b out of Eusebius^c,

^z De Trinit. adv. Meisnerum, p. 144.
Theod. l. i. c. 4.

^a Defence of the Nicene Faith, sect. 3.
c. 9. §. 11.

^b Defence of the Nicene Faith, sect. 4.
c. 3. §. 14.

^c H. E. l. i. c. 2.

“Where Eusebius, speaking of the Angel, which was worshipped by Abraham as God and Judge, writes thus, *Εἰ γὰρ*, &c. ‘For seeing it is highly irrational, that the unbegotten and immutable nature of Almighty God, should be turned into the form of a man, and deceive the eyes of the spectators with a false appearance of some creature; or that the Scripture should groundlessly feign any such thing: by what other name can that God and Lord, Who judges all the earth, and executes His judgment, appearing in the form of a man, be called, but of that Word of God, which was before all things, since this is by no means to be interpreted of the first Author of all things.’” But here again, according to his wonted ingenuity, he entirely passes over in silence another place of Eusebius, cited by me at the same time, whereby I explain Eusebius’s mind from Eusebius himself. That other place will shew that Eusebius did not at all think the Son of God, Who of old appeared in a visible form to the Fathers, to be in reality of a different nature from the Father, that is to say, of a finite and mutable nature; not to say that He was not actually changed by these appearances. He in many places rejects that blasphemy with detestation. Yea, he expressly teaches, that the Word of God, even after the assumption of true man into the unity of His Person, continued the same immutable, immense, and omnipresent God; in his Oration of the praises of Constantine, which is added at the end of his History^d, where he writes thus, “And in these things He ministered to the counsels of His Father, remaining the mean while void of matter, as He was before with the Father, neither His substance being changed, nor His nature lost, nor tied by the bonds of the flesh, nor verily to be contained in the place where His human vessel was, so as that He could upon no account be present any where else, but that at the same time when He conversed amongst men, He filled all things with His presence; and He was with the Father, and in the Father, and took care of all things both in Heaven and earth. Nor did any thing hinder Him, as it does us, from being present every where.”

Mr. Clerke produces some things out of Eusebius’s writings, which can very hardly, if at all, be defended. But these

^d Chap. 14.

are taken out of those books, which were written before the Council of Nice. And Valesius has justly and wisely observed of Eusebius's accusers^e, "They allege some passages of Eusebius, whereby to prove him a favourer of the Arian doctrine, but they never distinguish between the books he wrote before the Council of Nice, and those afterwards; which yet ought in all reason to be done, in order to the forming a certain and right judgment of Eusebius's faith. For so many of them as were written before the Nicene Synod, ought not to be objected and imputed to Eusebius."

Henceforward for several pages together, Mr. Clerke is got again to Clement, and vexes and tortures his writings, whereby to force something out of them, that may serve his cause, but all in vain. Let the candid reader consult my Defence^f, and he will wonder at the confidence of the man, in daring to appeal to this most learned Father, as a patron of the Arian or semi-Arian tenets. One word *προσεχυστάτη* has taken such entire possession of the vain man's brains, and they are so full of it, that he could never since see any thing that was right, either in Clement, or in the rest of the Fathers. Whereas in truth had he read, and seriously weighed with himself, what follows in Clement immediately after *προσεχυστάτη*, he would have found that this most excellent Father, did by no means design, by that word, to signify the Divinity of the Son to be any way inferior to that of the Father. "This," says Clement, "is the greatest excellency, which orders all things after the Father's will, and governs the universe in the best manner, working all things by a power that is never to be wearied or exhausted, because it works with its eye fixed upon hidden notions. For the Son of God never comes down from His watch-tower, as never being divided, never parted asunder, and never passes from place to place, but is always every where, and yet contained no where: all mind, all the Light of the Father, all eye; sees all things, hears all things, knows all things, and by His power searches the powers." In these words the principal essential attributes of God, and which are not communicable to the creatures, are nevertheless given to the Son, namely, immutability, immensity, omnipresence, and omniscience. Now will

^e Vales. de Vit. &c. Script. Euseb.

^f Sect. 2 c. 6.

this sophister here obtrude upon us his threadbare distinction of a "higher" and a "lower" sense? or if he should, who can conceive a lower omniscience, or a lower omnipresence? Clement here absolutely and simply affirms the Son of God to be present every where, not to be contained in any space, to see all things, hear all things, and know all things. And what room can here be for a lower sense, without a contradiction? For that would be the same thing, as to say, The Son of God is infinite, and no place can contain Him, and yet He is circumscribed in a certain place; the Son of God is omnipresent, yet there are some places where He is not; He sees all things, hears all things, knows all things, but still there are some things which He neither sees, hears, nor knows. Besides, it is in an especial manner to be taken notice of, that the Son is here styled by Clement, "all mind, all the Light of the Father." Which words perspicuously declare the Father's Divinity to be in the Son, and, by consequence, that the Divinity of the Father and of the Son is the same.

P. 102. Mr. Clerke takes to task the place I had cited out of the Epistle to Diognetus^g, attributed to Justin, and if not his, was yet written by some Catholic author at least of the same age with him. "Dr. Bull," says he, "alleges out of Justin's Epistle to Diognetus, many things magnificently spoken of Christ, such as that the stars obey Him, &c., but all these will be abundantly settled by Clement's *προσεχέστατη*." O rare! what is it this most powerful word *προσεχέστατη* cannot bring to pass! If a hundred places were produced, from any primitive Father, declaring the Son's Divinity in the most significant words that can be, this will be of no service with Mr. Clerke; that one word of Clement will answer all, and that abundantly. However, should I grant Mr. Clerke that this word of Clement does really signify as he would have it, what is this to the author of the Epistle to Diognetus? Are all the first Fathers to be expounded by that one word of Clement? But the reader may consult the passage out of the Epistle to Diognetus, cited in the Defence, &c.^h; and there he will find the true Divinity of the Son declared by the author in the

* This Epistle Dr. Cave concludes to be Justin's own; and Mr. Du Pin

favours also the same opinion.

^h Sect. 2. c. 4. §. 7.

most express words: "He expressly denies τὸν Λόγον, or the Son of God, to be His Minister, or creature, (which two words I have often observed to be of the same importance, and it is manifest enough that they are so,) calling Him Incomprehensible, and the Maker and Creator of all things, on Whose pleasure the whole frame of the world, both of Heaven and earth, depends, and by Whose power it is sustained; and to Whom all creatures of whatsoever rank are subject, and obey Him as their Maker, God, and Lord. He says, that He was sent into this world, as King from King, as God from God; as much as to say, the Son a King from the Father a King, the Son God from the Father God." Here to what I say, that the author expressly affirms God the Father to have sent His Son, οὐκ ὡς ὑπηρέτων, "not as His Minister or servant," Mr. Clerke replies, the answer is very easy. Let us therefore hear his answer, "The author means such a sort of servant as the Angels are, and men, who govern the things of this world, &c. as he explains himself; not a servant serving in a servile manner; for there is a vast distance between an Angel and the Son begotten of the Essence of the Father." Most certainly; between an Angel, and the Son begotten of the Essence of the Father, there is a vast distance; as great a distance as is between God and the creatures, that is, an infinite one. For whatsoever is begotten of the very Essence of God, must necessarily be God. Hence the author of the Epistle, after he had said that God the Father sent His Son, "not as His servant," adds that God the Father sent His Son as the very Maker and Creator of all things, as King from King, and finally as "God."

P. 104, 105. I have insisted on that noble testimony of Justin, relating to the worship and adoration of the Holy Trinity, of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghostⁱ. It is in these words^k, "We freely confess, that with respect to the reputed gods we are Atheists, and have none such; but we

ⁱ Defence, &c. Sect. 2. c. 4. §. 8.

^k Ἐνθὲνδε καὶ ἄθεοι κεκλήμεθα, καὶ δμολογοῦμεν τῶν τοσούτων νομιζομένων θεῶν ἄθεοι εἶναι, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τοῦ ἀληθεστάτου, καὶ πατρὸς δικαιοσύνης, καὶ σωφροσύνης, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀρετῶν, ἀνεπίμικτου τὲ κακίας θεοῦ, ἀλλ' ἐκείνου

τὲ, καὶ τὸν παρ' αὐτοῦ υἱὸν ἐλθόντα, καὶ διδάξαντα ἡμᾶς ταῦτα, καὶ τὸν τῶν ἄλλων ἐπομείνων καὶ ἐξομοιουμένων ἀγαθῶν ἀγγέλων στρατὸν, πνεῦμα τὲ τὸ προφητικὸν σεβόμεθα καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν λόγῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ τιμῶντες. p. 56.

are not without the most true God, the Father of justice, and chastity, and other virtues, and Who is free from all mixture and spot of vice. This same God, and the Son that cometh from Him, (and has taught us, and the host of those other His followers, the holy Angels, who are also made like to Him,) and the Holy Ghost, we worship, and adore, and venerate, rationally and truly." Upon which place Mr. Clerke makes this remark, "Justin seems to join the Angels in the third place with the Holy Ghost very indecently, if he had apprehended the Holy Ghost to be the Supreme God." Perhaps he seems so to Mr. Clerke, as he has to Bellarmine and other Romanists, (whose cause this gentleman is now pleading,) but really he by no means does it, as I have clearly shewn in the Defence of the Nicene Faith, where I have cited and explained at large this passage of Justin; and as I shall presently prove more fully. The sophister proceeds, "Justin distinguishes the Father under the name of the most true God, from the other Persons; which Dr. Bull overlooked as of no importance." I answer, Justin does indeed mention God the Father in the first place, under the title of the most true God, as being the Head and Principle of the Deity; but he does it not so, as to exclude the Son and Holy Ghost from the truth of the Divinity; on the other hand, he includes them, by joining them with God the Father, so as to be adored with the same Worship with Him. For the words *σεβόμεθα καὶ προσκυνούμεν*, "we worship and adore," are manifestly referred to all the Three Persons. However, to make the sense of this passage the more apparent, the evident opposition is especially to be taken notice of, that is betwixt *τοὺς νομιζόμενους θεοὺς*, "those reputed gods," which were falsely accounted, and worshipped as gods by the heathens, and the true God Whom alone the Christians adored. Justin confesses the Christians had none of those false gods which the heathens worshipped, and that they might in this sense be called Atheists; but that in truth they were so far from being Atheists, that they were really the most religious worshippers of the true God. But how does he prove this? "We worship," says he, "and adore God the Father, and His Son, and the Holy Ghost, rationally and truly, that is, with a rational and true worship, and not with carnal sacrifices." Now if either the Son, or the

Holy Ghost, were not true God, this had been a very weak defence of the Christians. Because so the Christians themselves had been chargeable with the same crime, of which they accused the heathens, I mean, with worshipping for God what really was not God. What follows in Mr. Clerke is wonderful; for he tells us, "Dr. Bull had good reason to excuse Justin from the invocation of Angels, seeing he in his public prayers invokes the Holy Ghost, without any example or precept in Scripture, or in the practice of the ancient Church, at least in their solemn assemblies." It is not easy to guess what the trifler intends here; would he have it thought, that the invocation of Angels is not to be disapproved of by any, who himself invokes the Holy Ghost? That this was his main design appears from hence, that the poor wretch presently after affirms expressly, that the Holy Ghost is nothing else but a "Chief among the Angels." But we, the sons of our holy mother, the Church of England, who hold the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, do upon just grounds invoke Him, not indeed separately, and as parted from the other Persons, but with relation to the Father and Son, Whose Spirit He is. For so we pray in our Litany, "O God the Holy Ghost, Who proceedest from the Father and the Son, have mercy upon us miserable sinners." Nor do we want some such example of this invocation in the Holy Scriptures: for so St. Paul concludes his second Epistle to the Corinthians, "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." For this is questionless not only a "general wish," as Mr. Clerke speaks, without any intuition of the mind, or pious elevation of the heart, to the Divine Persons; (far be it from us so much as to imagine that of so holy and so eminently pious an Apostle;) but it is undoubtedly a serious prayer to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to bestow upon his Corinthians the good things he wishes to them. And for this reason it is, that the prayer concludes with the solemn seal of prayers, Amen. And this Form of Prayer is found in the Liturgy of all Churches, and even the oldest of them. Besides, the three-fold invocation, "Lord have mercy upon us," &c. which is by all writers of Liturgical matters referred to the blessed Trinity, is very ancient, and used in the Churches, especially of the Greeks, from the utmost

antiquity, as may be seen in Cardinal Bona¹. But I need not enlarge upon this. Justin, in this very place which we have now under consideration, expressly testifies the Catholic Christians of his age, to have in common worshipped and adored the Holy Ghost also, together with the Father and the Son. The same is testified likewise by the Doxologies in the most ancient Churches, of which Justin also speaks, in which the Holy Ghost is joined with the Father and the Son^m. And again, hereto agrees the seraphical Hymn called the Trisagion, "Holy, holy, holy," &c. that used to be sung in all Churches throughout the Christian world, in the celebration of the tremendous Mysteryⁿ. Can it then be thought a sin to invoke Him, Whom we thus adore and glorify with the Father and the Son, and to implore His mercy and help in our prayers?

Afterwards Mr. Clerke takes me to task very sharply, for having absurdly interrupted the order of the words in this place of Justin, by joining the Angels not with *σεβόμεθα*, "we worship," but *διδάξαντα*, "teaching." And I answer that the words *σεβόμεθα*, "we worship," and *προσκυνούμεν*, "we adore," can no way be referred to the host of the holy Angels, as will be evinced by this irrefragable argument. If those words be referred to the Angels; it will follow, that not only Justin approved of the religious worship of Angels, (which no man in his wits can believe, that has read his Dialogue with Trypho with any manner of care,) but also that the Catholic Church of Christ in Justin's days worshipped Angels, and with the worship of *Latreia*, "the highest sort of worship." For nothing can be more evident, than that Justin pleads the common cause of the Christians, and defends their religion against the heathens. And it is no less certain, that it is not any sort of worship whatsoever that is here treated of, but the worship, as I said, of *Latreia*, such as the Catholic Church gives to God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But now it appears most plainly, that the religious worship of Angels was utterly unknown in Christ's Catholic Church, during the three first centuries, and after. Read the writings that remain of the Doctors of the first

¹ Rer. Liturg. l. ii. c. 4.

ⁿ Of which see Card. Bona, Rer.

^m See the Defence, sect. 2. c. 3. §. 6. Liturg. l. ii. c. 10.

9. 12.

ages, read the most ancient Liturgies, and you will not find the least tittle in them concerning the religious worship of Angels. It was the consentient voice of the Catholic Church of those first ages, that none but God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, was to be religiously worshipped and adored.

Wherefore it remains, that *σεβόμεθα* be joined with *διδάξαντα*, and that the mention of good Angels in this place, respects what had been spoken a little before of the evil angels. Which, that it may appear the more clearly, it is to be observed, that it is not said simply "the host of Angels," but *τὸν τῶν ἄλλων ἀγγέλων στρατὸν*, "the host of the other Angels." Certainly the word *other* manifestly respects other Angels, of whom Justin had been speaking before. But he had said a little before, that the Christians had been taught by Christ their Master, about avoiding the evil angels or devils, whom the heathens had for their gods. Here he adds, that we are taught by the same Christ, concerning the other Angels. But what has our Master taught us concerning those other Angels? Only that they are good, and made like their most holy Creator in holiness; but yet *ἐπομένους*, "following spirits," (a metaphor that I have shewn was taken from footmen, who are wont to follow behind their masters,) and hence that they are not to be religiously worshipped and adored. But what pious man can without horror read those words of Mr. Clerke which follow soon after. "Justin," says he, "joins the Holy Ghost with Angels, as if He were one, and of the chief of them, as He really is, whatsoever Justin thought of Him." Here he follows the English John Biddle, whom in his Ante-Niceneism he defends against Mr. Estwick. But this foolish and impudent contrivance is not proper for this place, nor does it deserve any elaborate refutation. It is certain, in the highest degree, that neither Justin, nor his cotemporary Catholic Christians, looked upon the Holy Ghost as an Angel.

P. 110. He comes to an objection taken from the immensity and invisibility of God, which the primitive Doctors seem to yield to God the Father, but utterly to withdraw it from the Son of God. "Let us hear," says Mr. Clerke, "the solution of this knot, which may be comprehended in few words; this knot

he dispatches by assumed forms, and a symbolical and economical Presence. The original of the Trinity, and its economy, are with our Trinitarians two omnipotent distinctions. But here Dr. Bull could not have recourse to the original, or beg the question; for this reason he flies to the economy." For answer whereto, I say, O most impudent man! That distinction concerning the economy is no subterfuge groundlessly invented by me or any other Trinitarian, nor am I constrained to betake myself to it, but being loudly and audibly called upon by those same Fathers, who have seemed to deny the Son's immensity and invisibility. I have spent a whole chapter, and a very long one, in answering the objection proposed, namely in the Defenceⁱ. And the sum of my answer is this. "Those Doctors of the Church who wrote before the rise of Arius's heresy, as oft as they reason thus: It was not God the Father, but the Son, that appeared under the Old Testament, and became incarnate in the fulness of time, the Father is infinite, and cannot be included in a place, is invisible, and cannot be seen by any: they did not intend to deny the Son of God to be in His nature immense and invisible, as well as the Father; but only signified hereby, that both all those appearances of God, and even the Incarnation itself, had relation to the economy which the Son of God had taken upon Him; which economy could no way suit with the Father, because of His having no principle from whence He is, nor deriving His authority from any besides Himself." That this was the certain intent and opinion of those ancients, I have made appear upon these two accounts. First, Because upon other occasions, they in many places all confess God the Son to be, as well as the Father, in His own nature immense, omnipresent, and invisible. And again, Because some of them do themselves expressly interpret these their sayings concerning the economy. What therefore has Mr. Clerke to say to this? He pleads, "The Fathers were solicitous above all that have been most forward, to assert to the Father, the prerogative, as to the supreme God, both as to His nature, and as to His attributes and operations, (for in all these things the Fathers had their higher and their lower sense,) so as that they thought the immensity of Almighty God did excel and tran-

ⁱ Sect. 4. c. 3. §. 12.

scend the immensity of the Son and Holy Ghost, (not in any great degree,) yet so far, that God Almighty neither ascended, nor descended, nor did or could appear in a place, in such a manner as the Son appeared, not even so much as in a figure." This is a perfect begging the question; and I have shewn by many, and those most convincing testimonies, that those ancient Doctors thought the Nature and Essence of God the Father and the Son, was exactly the same, and their essential attributes the same; and, by consequence, that the immensity, omnipotence, and invisibility of both, is the same. Why does he not return an answer to these testimonies? Undoubtedly because he has no satisfactory answer to return. It would be too much to repeat all those testimonies in this place. The reader may find them in the third chapter of the fourth section concerning the subordination of the Son to the Father, &c. I shall instance only in two at present; one is of Clement of Alexandria^k, "The Son of God never comes down from His watch-tower, as never being divided, never parted asunder, and never passes from place to place, but is always every where, and contained no where; all mind, all the Father's light, all eye, sees all things, hears all things, knows all things, and by His power searches the powers. To Him all the host of the Angels and Gods is in subjection: I say, to the Word of the Father, which took upon Him the holy dispensation, for His sake Who put them in subjection." Lo, here he teaches plainly, that the Word or Son of God is not divided, not parted asunder, does not pass from place to place, that He is always every where, and is contained no where. Nevertheless he grants that the Son of God took upon Him the holy dispensation appointed Him by the Father, both when He appeared under the Old Testament, to the Prophets and holy men under a personated form, whether human, or of any other body; and especially under the New, when having assumed true man into the unity of His Person, He conversed with men upon the earth. The other testimony is of Tertullian against Praxeas^l, where upon that place of St. Matthew^m, he writes thus: "You have the Son on earth, you have the Father in heaven. It is not a separation, but a

^k Strom. 7. p. 702.^l Cap. 2.^m Chap. 17.

divine disposition. Yet you ought to know that God is also within the abysses, and consists every where, but it is by His might and power; and likewise that the Son is every where with Him, as not divided from Him. However, in the dispensation, the Father would have the Son to dwell on earth, and Himself in heaven." Where he clearly teaches, that the Son of God, and God the Father, are alike present every where, which he proves also by this sound reason, that the Son is undivided from the Father, nor can be separated from Him. Which reason all the Catholic Fathers, as well ante-Nicene as post-Nicene, allowed of. They all profess with one mouth, that the Son is begotten of the Essence of the Father, without any parting or division, and that He is so brought forth of the Father, as never to be separated from the Father. Whereas if the omnipresence of God the Father, were of larger extent than the omnipresence of the Son of God, (pardon me, that I am forced by an absurd adversary to speak absurdly,) then would God the Father be where the Son is not, and so the Father and Son would be separated from each other.

As to what Mr. Clerke says next, That the ancient Doctors thought it not God the Father Who appeared of old to the Patriarchs and other holy men, "because they judged it could not consist with the most high and excessive prerogative of His attributes; and that not upon account of any indecency, as Dr. Bull speaks, nor because God is the Fountain of the Trinity. For how does a fountain relate to local motion, unless it be for the sake of washing or drinking?" All blasphemous scoffing set aside with abomination, I answer, That those holy Fathers thought far otherwise; "For in their judgment, God the Father was never seen by any man, nor can be seen, not so much as by means of any assumed appearances. And having no principle from whence He is, He is subject to none; nor can be said to be sent by another, any more than to be born of another. On the contrary, the Son of God, in regard of His being born of the Father, does certainly upon that account receive all His authority from the Father; nor is it any more dishonour to Him to be sent by the Father, than to be born of Him. He is of the

Father, by Him the Father made all things that are in the world, and moreover in His due time made Himself known to the world by Him. In the most holy Trinity, though there is no natural disparity betwixt the Father and the Son, there is yet undoubtedly a certain order, according to which the Father is the Principle and Head of the Son. Which order would be inverted, if the administration of things were from the Son by the Father."

P. 114. Mr. Clerke treats of Athenagoras, and the remarks I have made in relation to Athenagoras, but like himself, so confusedly, that I confess I know not how, or what I am to answer. The truth is, sophister-like, he takes refuge and shelter in his confusion, whereby to hide himself from the strokes of his adversary. I beseech the impartial reader to look into what I have produced out of Athenagoras, in the Defence of the Nicene Faithⁿ, where I have fully shewn the most learned Father, to have all along owned the consubstantiality of the Son of God, as also of the Holy Ghost. Whereto Mr. Clerke returns not one word of answer. Let him consult also the testimonies I have brought from Athenagoras, for the eternity of the Son of God^o. And let us see what answer is given to them. He says, "Doctor Bull cites page 10. *πρῶτον γέννημα εἶναι τῷ Πατρὶ, οὐχ ὡς γενόμενον*, that 'He is the first Offspring to the Father, not as made.' *The first Offspring*, which words contradict the coeternity of the Son, upon a twofold account, that is to say, both as He is the *first*, and as He is the *begotten Son*." But it is intolerable to think this sophister should have the confidence to urge Athenagoras's words against the eternity of the Son, which Athenagoras himself observes expressly, to have no manner of repugnancy to His coeternity. "We say," says Athenagoras, "that the *Λόγος*, the Word, or the Son of God, is the first Offspring of the Father, not as made." What has Mr. Clerke to say to this? He says, "Why then does Dr. Bull allege this place? It was for the sake of these following words, *οὐχ ὡς γενόμενον*, 'not as a thing that was made,' in which clause almost all his argumentation lies; other things are only by way of exposition, and to avoid the darts of the adversaries. Yet howsoever he often

ⁿ Sect. 2. c. 4. §. 9.

^o Defence, Sect. 3. c. 5.

boasts of the force of this word, all its force will be blown away with one gentle blast. I acknowledge *γενόμενον* in this place to signify ‘made.’ No doubt it does. But presently after Athenagoras himself explains his own meaning; telling us he speaks of such a making, as is that of all material things; and of the Angels, who, as Dr. Bull observes, he says were made^p. Would Athenagoras therefore have the Word not to be made, that is, as the other creatures, none of which are the product of the Divine Essence?” But what man in his wits can believe a most learned writer, as it is evident Athenagoras was, could be so exceedingly foolish as to imagine any thing begotten of the very Essence of God, could be any way made, or be a creature? It is an undoubted axiom, that whatsoever is begotten of God, that is, of the very Essence of God, must necessarily be God. But the sense of Athenagoras in these words, “not as made,” is most manifest, namely, that the Word, or the Son of God, when He proceeded from God by His own power to make all things, was not then made, nor did begin to exist. How does he prove this? “For,” says he, “from the beginning, God, Who is an eternal mind, had in Himself the *Λόγον*, ‘the Word, or Reason,’ since He is eternally rational.” Where he infers the eternal existence of the *Λόγος*, from its eternal and necessary cause, the reason and understanding of God. As to that sense which Mr. Clerke would fix upon these words, (that the Word was potentially in God, with respect to the essential reason and wisdom of God, as an attribute, not as a distinct Person,) how great an absurdity this is, I have shewn at large, Defence of the Nicene Faith, the chapter above-mentioned, §. 5, whither I refer the reader.

P. 117. Mr. Clerke thus attacks me, upon the account of this place of Athenagoras, and my explication of it. “Dr. Bull is plainly forced, I say is forced, to set up a twofold *generation* of the Son, before the world was created, (a thing unheard of, and new to those of his own persuasion,) the one properly said to be from eternity, whereby to defend the opinion of the modern Divines; the other *metaphorical*, in a *production* that was a little before the making of the world, lest he should forsake the Fathers of the first ages, and offend them all to a man.

Of which two generations, Dr. Bull is deservedly to be accounted the inventor." I answer, Were it true that I first invented that distinction, there was no reason why I should either be ashamed or repent of it; for it is of great use for explaining the sense of some of the ancient Fathers, who have hitherto been thought, even by learned men, to favour the Arian opinion. Besides, this distinction of a twofold generation of the *Λόγος*, or Son of God, before the world was made, as is worthy to be observed, gives a light to those places of the ancient Doctors, that the Son was begotten of God, according to the good pleasure of the Father, by His will and counsel. Which sayings of theirs, Divines take a great deal of fruitless pains to reconcile with the eternal generation of the Son. Those sayings are doubtless to be understood of the second generation, improperly so called, wherein the Word, when God the Father thought fit, was as it were born of Him, and went out to frame the universe. In the mean time it is certain, that all those Fathers who speak thus, did acknowledge another generation, or production of the Son, properly so called, which was both eternal and necessary. It is really impossible, (as I have elsewhere observed from Athanasius,) that God can rightly be conceived so one, as that He is, or ever was, but one Person, seeing it is necessary that God Who is an eternal mind, have His Word in and with Himself, and not only as to His humanity, but as living and subsisting, inasmuch as from His being a living and subsisting Word, He is a Person; and because He is the Word from the Father, He is a Divine Person distinct from the Father; that in respect of this eternal generation or production, the Word may be called the Son of God, some of the ancients have rightly observed. So Tertullian, "Every original is a parent, whatever proceeds from such original is its offspring." With Tertullian agrees Athanasius, in his fifth Oration against the Arians, "For if the Word is not God, they would deservedly deny Him to be the Son of God; but if He be of God, how come they not to see that that which is of another thing, is the Son of that from whence it is." And of this distinction I have had very great authors, Zeno of Verona, the Emperor Constantine, the great Athanasius, Rupertus Tuitiensis, and even the Nicene Fathers themselves, as I

have copiously and perspicuously shewn^a. What he farther produces out of Theophilus of Antioch, Novatian, &c. discoursing the same things about the generation of the Son of God that Athenagoras does, will be fully explained by what has been said of Athenagoras.

P. 130. Mr. Clerke comes to that place of Irenæus^r, where he attributes to Christ an ignorance of the day and hour of the last judgment. To which place I have largely answered^s, where I have freely confessed, these words of Irenæus appear at the first sight to ascribe ignorance to the Son of God, and even where He is most properly the Son of God. I add here, that the holy Father was hurried on by an excessive zeal and earnestness, in opposing the wicked Gnostics, to speak incautiously, as it sometimes happens to very good men; but that Irenæus did really believe, that Christ as God was ignorant of any thing, none can imagine who knew Irenæus, or has attentively read his works. No one ever more clearly asserted the most absolute Divinity of the Son, equal to that of the Father, than Irenæus. And even in that same chapter, where he attributes that ignorance to Christ, he says expressly, as I have observed, "That the Spirit of our Saviour, which is in Him, searches all things, even the deep things of God." Where by the Spirit which is in our Saviour, I have proved from two places of Irenæus, that His divine Nature is denoted. And it is but in vain that Mr. Clerke answers, "The words cited by Dr. Bull seem plainly by the places cited in the margin by Gallasius, namely, 1 Cor. ii. 10, and xii. 4, to refer to the Holy Ghost." It is true those texts do speak of the Holy Ghost also, the third Person of the Divinity, searching all things. But what is this to the present case? The question is, what Irenæus intends here, by the Spirit of our Saviour, that is in Him. And we plead that he intended the divine Nature in Christ according to His divine hypostasis, as was not only his own manner of speaking, but that of other ancient Doctors, and even of the Scripture in divers places; as I have shewn elsewhere^t. The reader may also find other of

^a Defence, Sect. 3. c. 9.

^r L. ii. c. 4.

^s Defence, Sect. 2. c. 5. §. 8.

^t See Defence of the Nicene Faith, Sect. 1. c. 2. §. 5.

my annotations on this passage of Irenæus, in the chapter above cited.

P. 133. The most vain man makes a great noise with, and values himself much upon, another passage of Irenæus that I had not taken notice of. "To my gigantic argument," says he, "out of Irenæus, from the dominion of the Son over the Holy Ghost, Dr. Bull answers nothing; perhaps he overlooked that place, though I cannot but wonder how he should do it." But this giant is easily humbled. The passage of Irenæus this trifler means, is to be found l. iii. c. 6; and runs thus according to Feuardentius's edition. "Wherefore I also call upon Thee, O Lord God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, (Who is also Israel,) Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, O God! Who through the multitude of Thy mercies hast been gracious to us, in vouchsafing us the knowledge of Thee, Who hast made heaven and earth, Who rulest over all, Who art the only true God, over Whom there is no other God through our Lord Jesus Christ, *Dominatione quoque dominaris Spiritus S.* 'Thou also rulest by the dominion of the Holy Ghost.'" Upon which words Feuardentius has this remark, "The Old Book reads it thus, *Dominationem quoque donas Spiritus S.*, 'Thou givest also the government of the Holy Ghost.' Perhaps it should be read *Donationem*, 'the gift of the Holy Ghost.' Whether you read it the one way, or the other, you have here a confirmation of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, eternal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son, and His majesty and dominion, against the old and later Arians." O rare! Feuardentius establishes the eternal Divinity of the Holy Ghost, from this very place, from whence Mr. Clerke would prove the Holy Ghost to be, according to Irenæus, a mere creature put under the dominion of the Son of God. But the true reading is, *Donationem quoque donas Spiritûs Sancti*, "Thou also givest the gift of the Holy Ghost^x," as Feuardentius partly acknowledges, and my most learned and kind friend, J. Erneste Grabe, has manifestly proved from the collation of Manuscripts, in his most accomplished edition of the works of Irenæus, whose annotation upon the place is well worth your

^x *Dominationem quoque dona Spiritus Sancti, i. e. Fac ut per Christum domi-* *netur etiam in cordibus nostris Spiritus Sanctus, says D. Renat Massuet.*

reading through. I profess this most unjust calumny of Mr. Clerke against this holy Martyr, is intolerable. For I have demonstrated Irenæus, from the most convincing testimonies, alleged out of himself, to have constantly owned the most absolute Divinity of the Holy Ghost^r.

P. 135. At length Mr. Clerke comes to the conclusion of his work, such as well suits with the rest of his performance. "Now," says he, "let us cast our eyes back to what has been said; what mighty service has Dr. Bull done his cause, by citing about thirty Fathers, scarce half of whom have left us any undoubtedly genuine writings, though out of as many thousand Bishops, to shew the Catholic doctrine, that is the opinion of the generality of Christians, from the Apostles' times and downwards. Let us hear what Eusebius says of the Bishops^z; Victor (at Rome) succeeded Eleutherius; at Alexandria, Demetrius succeeded Julian; at Antioch, the eighth from the Apostles was Serapion; Theophilus then presided at Cæsarea; Narcissus at Jerusalem, Bachylus at Corinth, and Polycrates at Ephesus, were of great note amongst the Bishops. Besides that, in many other places we hear of famous Priests about that time." I answer, That I have cited no writings of the ancients, for the Catholic faith, which if they were called in question, I have not first proved by solid arguments, to belong of right to those authors whose names they bear. Had Eusebius been silent in the case, who could possibly doubt that there were many famous Doctors in the Church? but what good does this do Mr. Clerke and his party? It seems he would have his reader suspect all those, or at least the greater part of them, to have been constantly of opinion with the Unitarians, in the question concerning the Person of Christ; than which nothing is falser. I have proved in my dispute with Zuicker, that the Catholic opinion concerning Christ prevailed in the Church of Jerusalem, the mother of all other Churches, from the Apostles to the time of Adrian, when that Church was scattered abroad. I have proved by unexceptionable witnesses, Hegesippus and Irenæus, that the same doctrine had descended by uninterrupted tradition, in all other Churches, from the beginning to their times. But Mr. Clerke proceeds,

^r Defence, sect. 2. c. 5. §. 9.

^z Eccl. Hist. l. v. c. 22.

“And the same Eusebius,” says he, “makes mention of many Unitarians, who were near the days of the Apostles, and boasted of the Apostles and their successors, as for the most part on their side, before Victor; and that there were such as were esteemed great philosophers and mathematicians, whose names he recites, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, Artemon, Paulus Samosatenus, Natalis, Beryllus, Theodotus, Asclepiodotus, Hermophilus, Apollonides, &c.”

Certainly, were not Mr. Clerke past all shame, he would never have dared to put these infamous names in the balance against those holy Doctors and Martyrs of the Catholic Church, whose writings I have appealed to. Some of them have apostatized from the Christian faith to Judaism; the rest were most desperate heretics, except Natalis and Beryllus, who though they had for some time embraced the heresy of denying our Saviour's Divinity, yet both at length returned to the Communion of the Catholic Church, and died in it. All the rest, I say, were condemned by the universal Church as heretics. Mr. Clerke had said above, he wished his soul might be amongst better Divines than the Trinitarians are. And are these his better Divines? The Lord have mercy upon him!

Thus at last Mr. Clerke finishes his discourse; “Now that I may at length conclude, though I should grant Dr. Bull that all his testimonies were of the greatest force, yet would they not be satisfactory to us who have known the mystery of the great Apostasy; but we should still appeal from the ante-Nicene Fathers to the Apostles.” And in what manner Mr. Clerke, and his companions here in England, have appealed to the Apostles and the Scriptures of the New Testament, we all very well know. The places of Holy Scripture brought by us for the Catholic faith, though the clearest that can be, they either wrest intolerably, or question their authority, or perhaps utterly reject it. I could confirm what I say with instances, which would make every good man's ears tingle. But I will shut up these my animadversions, with a serious admonition to my readers, especially to the candidates of Divinity, in the words of the Apostle St. Peter, in his second Epistle, the last chapter and the end of that chapter, “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest

ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

N. B. The preceding Discourse is a translation from the Latin original of the Author, which will be found at the end of the sixth Volume of Dr. Burton's edition. Oxford, 1827.

DISCOURSE V.

CONCERNING THE FIRST COVENANT, AND THE STATE OF MAN BEFORE
THE FALL, ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE, AND THE SENSE OF THE
PRIMITIVE DOCTORS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Written at the request of a Friend.

[^aIN all the transactions between God and mankind, some promises have ever been condescended to on God's part, and some conditions have ever been required on our side, in order to obtain and preserve His favour. So it was in the state of innocency, as appears from the very original law given to man in Gen. ii. 16, 17; which was not established only with a threatening, but with a promise also annexed; and consequently was more than a mere law. So it continued after the fall, as is undeniable from those most remarkable words of God to Cain, recorded in Gen. iv. 7, and from the constant manner of God's proceeding with the Patriarchs and others in the Old Testament. But then it ought nevertheless to be observed, that besides the seeds of natural religion sown in man's mind at the creation, he was also endowed with certain supernatural gifts and powers, in which his perfection chiefly consisted, and without which his natural powers were of themselves insufficient to the attainment of an heavenly immortality; and, consequently, that the law of nature as considered now in fallen man, without Divine revelation, and without any supernatural assistance, is much less able to confer the heavenly immortality and bliss upon them that live up to it. Since both from Scripture, and the consentient testimony of the ancient Catholic

^a The beginning of this MS. being wanting, that which is included between the two crotchets is added to supply the introduction, being extracted from the author's own writings.

writers, it is plain, as I have elsewhere shewed^c, that there was a covenant of life made with man in his state of innocency, and not (as some pretend) only a law imposed upon him; that this covenant was by the transgression of the protoplast made void both to him and his posterity; that all his posterity, as such, were thereby wholly excluded from the promise of eternal life made in that covenant, and consequently subjected to a necessity of death without hope of any resurrection; that, as such, they are only under the obligation of the law of nature, and the dictates of common reason; that this law is not a law of perfect obedience, or a rule of perfection; that it hath not the reward of eternal life annexed; and that there is no covenant of life eternal, which God ever entered into with the posterity of fallen Adam, but that only which is confirmed and ratified in Christ, the “second Adam;” and which is by consequence the very same with the Gospel itself.

But because from what I have already written on this head, it may not be sufficiently evident to all, what the nature of this covenant of life eternal was, which God made with man in his state of integrity, and what were the means proportioned to it in order to the end, I shall readily take the pains to explain the sense of the Catholic Church hereupon, in which I readily concur and acquiesce; and I would have it to be accounted as my own. That there was then such a covenant made with man by God, I cannot doubt in the least. I am not ignorant that the school of Socinus (which taketh too) ^d great a liberty of interpreting Scripture against the consent of the Catholic Church) flatly denies it, affirming the law given to Adam to have been a mere law, established only with a threatening, and no covenant, or law with a promise annexed. But the contrary is most evident. For, 1. The prohibition given to Adam, concerning the not eating of the tree of knowledge, is ushered in (which very few interpreters take any exact notice of) ^e with this express donation or grant of God, that he might

^b Appendix ad Animad. xvii. §. 2, &c.

^c Here the Manuscript in the Bishop's own hand begins.

^d This was long ago observed by Theophilus Antiochen. l. ii. *ad Autolyce*. p. 101. [e. 24. p. 366.] where, speaking

of the law given to the first man, he hath these words, Ἐνετείλατο αὐτῷ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν καρπῶν ἐσθίειν, δηλονότι καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ τῆς ζωῆς, μόνου δὲ ἐκ τοῦ ξύλου τοῦ τῆς γνώσεως ἐνετείλατο αὐτῷ μὴ γεύσασθαι.

freely eat of all the rest of the trees in paradise, the tree of life not excepted. Now it is certain the tree of life was so called, because it was either a sacrament and divine sign, or else a natural means of immortality; that is, because he that should have used it, would (either by the natural virtue of the tree itself continually repairing the decays of nature, or else by the power of God) have lived for ever, as God Himself plainly assures us^f. So that the sense of this whole legislation to Adam is apparently this: "If thou shalt obey My commandment in not eating of the tree of knowledge, thou mayest continue in paradise, and freely enjoy all the other delights thereof, not being debarred from the tree of life itself, which thou mayest eat of, and live for ever: but if thou transgress this My commandment, in eating of the tree of knowledge, thou shalt certainly die." 2. The very commination itself, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," manifestly implies a promise. This consequence (whatever some idle wits have fancied to the contrary) is most firm: God threateneth death to man, if he eat of the forbidden fruit; therefore He promiseth life if he do not eat. ^gFor how insignificant would have been the threatening of death to man's eating of the forbidden fruit, if he should certainly and necessarily have died, whether he had eaten or not?

However, that Adam should not have died if he had not sinned, is so manifestly the doctrine of the Scriptures, and of the Church of God, both before and since Christ our Saviour's appearance in the flesh, that Pelagius of old, and Socinus in this latter age, are justly to be esteemed the most impudent of mortals for daring to call it into question. Yet because we live in an age wherein too many take the confidence *κινεῖν ἀκίνητα*, to shake the foundations of religion; and he is laughed at as guilty of a shameful *petitio principii*, that shall offer to beg any common principle of Christianity, even in a discourse with such as profess themselves Christians; I shall therefore (although I have already suggested such arguments as may satisfy the equal reader) give you a full state and resolution of this

^e Gen. iii. 22—24.

^f Supposing the observance of the law natural, which man had before received, even in his very creation, and

which also obliged him to obey every positive precept that God should give him.

question in a few words of Grotius, in his approved book *De Satisfactione Christi*^h, where he thus discourseth: "For the right understanding of the state of this question; we deny not, that man, when he was created, was earthly, who had a certain vital power, but no vivific power, as Paul teacheth usⁱ; and so that the condition of his body was such, that unless God supported it, it would have perished. But yet we stiffly maintain, that in the decree of God he should not have died, if he had persisted in innocence. This the very nobility and eminence of that creature evinceth, as being alone said to be created after the image of God; that is, with understanding and liberty of will, which is the foundation of his dominion over the other creatures; for he cannot be lord of other things, who is not lord of his own actions. This excellency therefore above other creatures is an argument, that in the creation of man there was designed more than a temporary use of him. But now what is more clear than that voice of God? 'If thou eatest thereof thou shalt die.' The act of death is here meant, whether that should be violent or otherwise. Therefore this very thing, to die, would not have happened to man, if he had not happened to sin. No less clear and general is that of St. Paul, 'The wages,' that is the punishment, 'of sin is death^k.' He had before said, 'By sin death, and so death passed upon all men.' He saith, 'all men,' therefore he speaks concerning the common end of all mankind. 'By man,' therefore, that is, by the act of man, 'came death,' and 'by man, the resurrection of the dead. As in Adam all die,' (as many as die,) 'so also in Christ shall all be made alive^l,' (as many as shall be made

^g Cap. i. p. 27—31.

^h 1 Cor. xv. 45, 46.

ⁱ Rom. vi. 23.

^k See Rom. viii. 10, 11. On which text St. Austin thus excellently discourseth. Puto quod non expositore, sed tantum lectore opus habet tam clara et aperta sententia. Corpus, inquit, mortuum est, non propter fragilitatem terrenam, quia de terræ pulvere factum est, sed propter peccatum; quid amplius quærimus? Et vigilantissime non ait *mortale*; sed *mortuum*. Nam antequam mutetur in illam incorruptionem, quæ in sanctorum resurrectione promittitur, poterat esse mortale, quamvis non mori-

turum, sicut hoc nostrum potest, ut ita dicam, esse ægrotabile, quamvis non ægrotaturum. Cujus enim caro est quæ non ægrotare possit, etiamsi aliquando casu priusquam ægrotet occumbat? Sic et illud corpus jam erat mortale, quam mortalitatem fuerat absumptura mutatio in æternam incorruptionem, si in homine justitia, id est, obedientia permaneret; sed ipsum mortale non est factum mortuum nisi propter peccatum. Quia vero illa in resurrectione futura mutatio, non solum nullam mortem quæ facta est propter peccatum, sed nec mortalitatem habitura est, quam corpus animale habuit ante peccatum, non ait, *qui suscita-*

alive^m.) Who is there, that, reading the words themselves, doth not presently see that this place to the Corinthians exactly answers to that to the Romans? Such a death therefore is here meant, as is common to the posterity of Adam, and out of which they rise, whosoever do rise. Wherefore also comparing this place with that to the Romans, we say that this is meant of Adam as a sinner; for what is here said, 'by man,' he there saith, 'by sin.' The animal condition of Adam is above twenty verses after touched on by the Apostle upon a quite different occasion: for here death is opposed to the resurrection; but there the qualities of the body, as at first created, and then as raised, are compared with each other; whereof the one had, with the natural possibility of dying, conjoined a possibility also of living through the favour of God: but the other shall have life itself after such a manner, that it shall have no natural possibility of dying at all. I cannot forbear here to add the notable testimony of the most excellent author of the Book of Wisdom, which, although it be not in the Hebrew canon, is yet of venerable antiquity, and was always had in esteem amongst Christians. Thus therefore he, 'For God made not death: neither hath He pleasure in the destruction of the living. For He created all things, that they might have their being: and the generations of the world were healthful; and there is no poison of destruction in them, nor the kingdom of death upon the earth: (for righteousness is immortal:) but ungodly men with their works and words called it to them: for when they thought to have it their friend, they consumed to nought, and made a covenant with it, because they are worthy to take part with itⁿ.' And presently after, 'For God created man to be immortal, and made him the image of His own^o propriety. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world: and they that do hold of his side do find it^p.' That the death here, which God is said not to have created nor willed,

vit Jesum Christum a mortuis, vivificabit et mortua corpora vestra, cum supra dixisset, corpus mortuum, sed vivificabit, inquit, et mortalia corpora vestra, ut scilicet jam non solum non sint mortua, sed nec mortalia, cum animale resurget in spiritale, et mortale hoc induet immortalitatem, et absorbebitur mortale a

vita. De Peccatorum Merit. et Remiss. c. Pelagianos, c. 4, 5.

^m 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.

ⁿ Chap. i. 13—16. See Ecclesiasticus xxv. 24.

^o Greek ἰδιότητος.

^p Chap. ii. 23, 24.

to wit, with a will antecedent to sin, is to be understood of every kind of death, the ἀφθαρσία or 'incorruption' opposed thereunto sheweth, unto the hope whereof man is said to be created; and that hope is not obscurely intimated to have been part of the Divine image, or at least a consequent thereof. Now incorruption excludes every kind of death, whether violent or not. And what the Apostle said, that death entered by man and by sin, this author had no less truly said, that death entered by the envy of the devil. For all these speeches note the same fact, viz. the first sin of man committed by the suggestion of the devil. Nor is that any hinderance, that the author here notes a certain special effect of death in relation to the wicked. For death entering by the first sin, and having obtained a right over all men, doth receive a certain peculiar force by the grievous and continual sins of particular men; in which sense 'sin' is said to be 'the sting of death'.^a Therefore they who dying are denied all passage to a better life, are justly called the confederates of death, or the yielding captives (*dedititii*), and the proper possession of death. It were most easy to demonstrate, if that were our business, that it was the constant opinion both of the Jews and Christians, that every kind of death whatsoever is the punishment of sin." Thus far Grotius.

I know these irrefragable arguments were afterwards nibbled at by Crellius the successor of Socinus and Smalcus in the Chair at Cracovia; but the frivolous and plainly ridiculous exceptions of the heretic are abundantly refuted by the famous Rivet, (who in this question happily proved the ὑπερασπιστὴς of Grotius,) upon the second chapter of Genesis^r, whither I refer you for full satisfaction. I have dwelt the longer in asserting this great truth, that Adam should never have died if he had not sinned; because this foundation being once surely laid, it will appear that the whole superstructure of the Catholic doctrine concerning the state of man in his integrity, and concerning man's fall by sin, which is to be measured by the former, is firmly built thereon: which is the reason why the Pelagians formerly, and the Socinians of late, have so strenuously opposed this verity. For let it be once granted, that man, if he had continued obedient, should have enjoyed an

^a 1 Cor. xv. 56.

^r Exercit. 21.

everlasting life, any man of reason, that shall more closely consider the matter, will presently collect, that this life should not, could not in any congruity be perpetuated in the earthly paradise, and therefore the man was in the design of God, after a certain period of time, to have been translated to a higher state, *i. e.* a celestial bliss. And from thence it will as readily follow, that man, being designed for such a supernatural end, must be supposed gradually at least to have been furnished by God with means proportioned thereunto, *i. e.* with certain supernatural gifts and powers, which we commonly call “original righteousness:” both which hypotheses you will see anon to have been the doctrine of the Catholic Church. In the mean time let us proceed in order.

It is questioned by some, whether Adam, besides this positive law given to him, had also another law implanted in him, which the Hebrews call **הקקי בלב** “the statutes in the heart,” we “the law of nature^s.” A man would think indeed, that no man in his wits should question this; yet Socinus not only questions, but flatly denies it, although the Remonstrants in their Apology (I know not with what design) endeavour to excuse and purge him from this error. But they wash the Ethiopian in vain; for any one that doubts may find this opinion professedly avowed and maintained by him in the third chapter of his Prælections. Besides, it is well known that Socinus taught that no man can by the light of nature (which it is certain he at least supposed to be the same in man before and since the fall) know that there is a God, and that this notion is due to God’s revealing Himself unto men. Nay, Episcopus himself, who penned that Apology of the Remonstrants, doth charge this error upon Socinus, and spends a learned and elaborate discourse in the refutation of it, so that I wonder he should so far forget himself. For if Socinus held, that no man can by the light of nature know that there is a God, then certainly he believed (or else maintained the grossest contradiction imaginable) that no man can by the mere light of nature discern any notion of religion whatsoever; seeing all notions of religion are manifestly founded on that

^s *Κἄν τῷ ποιεῖν νόμον δέδωκας αὐτῷ ἔμφυτον ὅπως οἴκοθεν καὶ παρ’ ἐαυτοῦ ἔχοι τὰ σπέρματα τῆς θεογνωσίας.* Sic Liturgia Clementis de Adamo. Const. Apost. viii. 12.

first principle, that there is a God. This therefore is another famous specimen of the intolerable impudence of that heretic in contradicting both the Scriptures (which manifestly assert such a natural law^t), and also the common sense and experience of mankind. For the history of the world assureth us, that *nulla gens tam barbara*, “there is no nation so barbarous,” so debauched, but that therein are to be found some notions of a Deity, and of moral good and evil.

That the protoplast, if he had done any thing contrary to the dictate of this natural law, *i. e.* of his reason, had sinned and been liable to punishment from God, no man that considers what he says will deny. The only question therefore remaining concerning this natural law, in reference to the positive law superadded, is this, Whether man’s right to immortality (and such a right we have already proved he had) was founded in this natural law, or in the positive law or covenant superadded? Or, to speak more plainly, (if possible,) Whether Adam by the observance of the law natural, if there had no positive law or covenant been superadded thereunto, could have challenged to himself a right of immortality? And this question (of great moment if well considered) will by any sober judgment be quickly resolved in the negative. For if immortality had been due to the observance of the law implanted in man from his creation, then certainly the legislation superadded, wherein that immortality was promised to man, no otherwise than upon the observance of the positive precept, would have been supervacaneous, and even absurd. In a word, the protoplast could have no right to immortality but what was founded in the gratuitous stipulation and covenant of God; or otherwise you must assert that Adam by his natural abilities could merit it. Now we read of no other stipulation or promise of life eternal made to Adam, but what is annexed to the positive law we have so long dwelt upon.

Paræus, in his Commentary upon Gen. ii. 7, propounds this question to be discussed, “Whether, how far, and when, Adam with the animal life received also a right of life eternal?” And he truly says of it, *Non est questio inanis*, “It is no vain

^t Rom. i. 19, 20; and ii. 12, 14, 15. eum animali vita etiam acceperit jus

^u An et quatenus et quando Adam vitæ æternæ?

useless question." But he that reads him will find (which I speak with the reservation of all due respect to the fame and learning of the writer) that he handles the question very perplexedly, which yet is very easily resolved upon the grounds already laid, premising only these two very easy explications, which nothing but the too much subtilty of the learned man could have rendered necessary.

1. That by "eternal life" in this question is meant "a never-ending life of happiness," (whether this life should have been continued in the earthly paradise, or only have commenced there, and been perpetuated in a higher estate, is an enquiry to be resolved anon by the judgment of the Church, and very good reasons confirming the same.) 2. That by "right" is to be understood not an absolute, fixed, immutable right, for it is certain Adam had no such, for then he could never have lost it; but *jus pendens*, "a right depending" upon a condition to be performed. These things being premised, an answer to each member of the threefold question is easily given. First, as to the question, whether Adam had a right to eternal life? it is answered, He had a right to a never-ending life of happiness; for we have already proved, that if he had not sinned, he should never have died. Secondly, as to the *quatenus*, or *quomodo*, how far Adam had a right, or what manner of right he had to life eternal? it is answered, He had no absolute, fixed, or immutable right, but only a right dependent upon a condition to be performed. Lastly, as to the *quando*, when Adam received this right? it is answered, When he received the promise or covenant, and not before. Adam indeed was before *δεκτικὸς* capable of a blessed immortality, (as you shall hear the Fathers speaking anon,) but a right to this immortality he had not till God made it over to him by covenant. In this covenant of grace and favour, (for so in confidence of the premises I shall be bold to call it,) as the sanction did assure Adam of a reward not due to his nature, viz. a blessed immortality; so the precept dictated a religion corresponding thereunto. For this positive law (whatsoever some Divines are pleased to say of it, I suppose, *oratorio more* to exaggerate the sin of Adam, (which may be proved heinous enough without this circumstance,) that it was *præceptum facillimum*) did lay no small restraint upon man's

natural (and so antecedently to the precept) lawful appetites. And that first upon his sensitive appetite. For the tree that was forbidden him was a mighty temptation to the eye, and therefore it is said^x, to be תַּאֲוָה לְעֵינַיִם “a desire,” *i. e.* most desirable “to the eyes,” more alluring than the rest of the trees in that garden of pleasure, having indeed no rival but the tree of life^y; which, together with it, was placed in the centre of paradise, and therefore much more exceeding any tempting delight which the earth impoverished by Adam’s sin now affords. This tree Adam must approach to and behold, as often as he had (for his necessity) a recourse to the tree of life; but touch it, taste it, he must not, under pain of death: and this was no small trial. But moreover the restraint laid upon our first parents in this one instance was, no doubt, a general intimation and hint given them, to call them from the animal to the divine life. For hereby they were admonished, that their felicity did not consist so much in those earthly pleasures, wherewith paradise abounded, (for then God would not have bound up their hands from touching the most delightful tree in that rich plantation,) as in virtue and obedience to God, wherein if they persisted, a happiness greater than all this awaited them. But, 2. This law did, in my judgment, lay a far greater restraint upon man’s rational appetite. For the tree forbidden was by God Himself styled “a tree of knowledge,” and it was a motive that seduced Eve, that the fruit of it was good to make one wise. The desire of knowing more is itself natural, and so lawful; and there is no desire more strong and forcible in man fallen, who is in any degree exalted above sense. To such a one it is more easy to allay the titillation of concupiscence than the itch of curiosity; nay, this busy, prying, inquisitive creature, is oftentimes observed to quit all the pleasures of sense, to forget his very meat and drink, to macerate his flesh with study in the pursuit of some new discovery, which, when he hath made, you shall hear him loudly proclaiming his εὐρηκα! and applauding himself no less than if he were become master of the wealth of both the Indies; so great is man’s thirst after knowledge. But

^x Gen. iii. 6.

^y Although that seems not to have been of so inviting an appearance, the

benefit and necessity thereof sufficiently recommending it to man’s use.

this desire Adam is commanded to repress and keep within its due bounds, *i. e.* to acquiesce for the present in those measures of knowledge he had, to content himself with that blessed simplicity, which, as the child of God he enjoyed, and therewith a happy freedom, and sported himself in paradise, as Clemens Alexandrinus^z elegantly expresseth it, not hunting after new inventions^a, but waiting on God in the way of prayer and obedience, for an increase of all useful knowledge, to be dispensed as it should seem good to the Divine wisdom. This precept then to Adam was a bridle to the deliciousness of his sense, and a check to the curiosity of his reason, a great experiment of his self-denial in both, and in general a call to the Divine life; and so no such slight and easy precept, as some have fancied, either mistaking the first natural constitution of man, or not weighing rightly the nature of the precept itself. These seem to me to cast unawares a slur upon the Divine wisdom, which was pleased to lay the main stress of the whole covenant made with the first man upon this one precept, and to suspend the great reward promised upon the performance thereof. St. Augustine's great wit easily observed this, and therefore he calls this precept, *perfectionis præceptum*^b, "a precept of perfection," and tells us withal, that Adam was upon the receiving of this precept advanced above his natural animal condition to a spiritual state, and that he received the same, *ut consummaretur*, "that he might be perfected." Not but that he thought, that the protoplast was from his very creation itself designed to this spiritual state, and furnished with endowments accordingly, (for it was certainly St. Austin's opinion, that Adam was *creatus in gratia*, "created in grace," as the schools speak,) but that upon the receiving of this positive law, he was actually called to this estate, whereunto he was before designed,

^z Admonit. ad Gent. edit. Heinsii, p. 69. [c. 11. p. 86.] 'Ο πρῶτος, ὅτε ἐν παραδείσῳ, ἐπαιξε λελυμένος, ἐπεί παιδίον ἦν τοῦ Θεοῦ.—παρήγετο ἐπιθυμίαις ὁ παῖς, ἀνδριζόμενος ἀπειθείᾳ.—'Ο δὲ ἀπλότητα λελυμένος ἄνθρωπος, &c. Before him Theophilus Antiochenus enquiring into the reasons why God forbade man to eat of the tree of knowledge,

gives this for one, ἐπὶ πλείονα χρόνον ἠβούλετο ἀπλοῦν καὶ ἀκέραιον διαμείναι τὸν ἄνθρωπον νηπιάζοντα· τοῦτο γὰρ ὁσιόν ἐστιν, &c. [l. ii. c. 25. p. 367.] This seems to be the sense of that place in Ecclesiastes. Grot. in locum. Vide Phil. Jud. de Mund. Opif.

^a Eccles. vii. 29.

^b De Gen. cont. Manich. ii. 8.

and to the exercise of those endowments, wherewith he before was furnished.

And this brings us to the very head of our enquiry, concerning the first covenant, and the state of man before the fall. The Church of God then (if we may gather its judgment from the writings of the most approved Doctors thereof in their several ages) hath constantly believed and asserted these two things.

1. That paradise was to Adam a type of heaven; and that the never-ending life of happiness promised to our first parents, if they had continued obedient, and grown up to perfection under that economy wherein they were placed, should not have been continued in the earthly paradise, but only have commenced there, and been perpetuated in a higher state; that is to say, after such a trial of their obedience, as should seem sufficient to the Divine wisdom, they should have been translated from earth to heaven.

2. (Which is indeed a consequent of the former hypothesis,) That our first parents, besides the seeds of natural virtue and religion sown in their minds, in their very creation, and besides the natural innocence and rectitude, wherein also they were created, were endowed with certain gifts and powers supernatural, infused by the Spirit of God; and that in these gifts their perfection consisted. Because I see these two hypotheses are by many very learned men with too great boldness questioned, and they seem to me the two main pillars of the Catholic doctrine concerning original sin, I shall give you an ample demonstration of them out of the writings of the ancients; and the many testimonies to be produced, you will, I presume, read, examine, and consider with as much patience at least, as I myself underwent the great labour of collecting them.

I begin with the first hypothesis, That paradise was to Adam a type of heaven; and that the never-ending life of happiness promised to our first parents, if they had continued obedient, and grown up to perfection under that economy wherein they were placed, should not have been continued in the earthly paradise, but only have commenced there, and been perpetuated in a higher state; that is to say, after such a trial of their obedience, as should seem sufficient to the Divine wisdom, they

should have been translated from earth to heaven. Which you will find confirmed by the following testimonies.

1. Justin Martyr^c, speaking of the creation of the world, delivers not his own private opinion, but the common sense of the Christians in his time, in these words, “We have been taught that He, (viz. God,) being good, did in the beginning make all things out of the unformed matter for the sake of men, who, if by their works they rendered themselves worthy of His acceptance, we presume should be favoured with His friendship, and should reign together with Him, being made incorruptible and impassible^d.”

2. Tatian, the scholar of Justin Martyr, in his Oration to the Greeks^e, speaking of our first parents, and shewing that the Spirit of God was familiarly conversant with their souls whilst they retained their integrity, hath these words; “The soul, having obtained a conjunction with the Divine Spirit, is not left helpless, but ascends to those regions whither it is led by the same Spirit: for the seat or habitation hereof is above, but the generation of the other is from beneath^f.” The same Tatian in the same Oration^g, speaks of the same matter more clearly thus, “For the heavenly Word, the Spirit begotten of the Father, &c. made man the image of immortality, in imitation of Him that begat him: that as immortality is with God, so after the same manner man, having received a portion of God, (viz. the Divine Spirit,) might become also immortal^h.” Where he expressly speaks of that immortality which is with God, and which far exceeds that pendulous (if I may so speak) and adventitious immortality, which Adam had in the earthly paradise; and he affirms that the protoplast, if he had retained and cherished the divine portion of the Spirit given to him, should at length have attained such immortality.

^c Apol. ii. p. 58. [Apol. i. 10. p. 48.]

^d Καὶ πάντα τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀγαθὸν ὄντα δημιουργῆσαι αὐτὸν ἐξ ἀμόρφου ὕλης δι’ ἀνθρώπου δεδογάμεθα· οἱ ἂν ἀξίους τῷ ἐκείνου βουλευματι ἑαυτοὺς δι’ ἔργων δείξωσι, τῆς μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἀναστρυφῆς καταξιωθῆναι προσειλήφμεν συμβασιλεύοντας, ἀφθάρτους καὶ ἀπαθείς γενομένους.

^e P. 152. [c. 13. p. 255.]

^f Συσυγίαν δὲ κεκτημένη [ψυχῇ] τὴν τοῦ θείου Πνεύματος, οὐκ ἔστιν ἀβοήθητος· ἀνέρχεται δὲ πρὸς ἅπερ αὐτὴν ὁδηγεῖ

χωρία τὸ Πνεῦμα· τοῦ μὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἄνω τὸ οἰκητήριον, τῆς δὲ κάτωθεν ἐστὶν ἡ γένεσις.

^g P. 146. [c. 7. p. 249.]

^h Λόγος γὰρ ὁ ἐπουράνιος Πνεῦμα γεγονὼς ἀπὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ Λόγος ἐκ τῆς λογικῆς δυνάμεως, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ γεννησάντος αὐτὸν Πατρὸς μίμησιν, εἰκόνα τῆς ἀθανασίας τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐποίησεν· ἵνα ὥσπερ ἡ ἀφθαρσία παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον Θεοῦ μοῖραν ἄνθρωπος μεταλαβὼν, ἔχη καὶ τὸ ἀθάνατον.

3. Irenæus, the auditor of Polycarp, who was the disciple of St. John, frequently delivers the same doctrine; his constant and every where repeated opinion being this, that we recover the same happiness in the second Adam which we had lost in the first. Yet I shall give you some particular testimonies out of him also. In the very beginning of the twenty-eighth chapter of his fourth bookⁱ, having immediately before told us, "That the friendship of God grants immortality to them that come unto Him^k;" he goes on thus, "Therefore in the beginning God formed Adam, not because He needed man, but that He might have an object, whereon to place His bounty, &c. Our service to God doth not give any thing to Him, nor doth God need man's obedience, but He gives life and incorruption, and ETERNAL GLORY to those that follow and obey Him^l." And presently after, "The Lord hath formed and prepared us for this very end, that whilst we remain with Him, we should partake of His glory. And so also from the beginning He made man for His own bounty^m."

4. Theophilus, the sixth Bishop of Antioch after the Apostlesⁿ, "God translated him (Adam) from the earth, out of which he was taken, into paradise, administering to him matter or occasion of proficiency; that increasing and being made perfect, he might at length be canonized or consecrated, and so ascend into heaven itself." Where, speaking to the Gentiles, he describes the designed translation of Adam from paradise to heaven, after the manner of their ἀποθέωσις, or consecration of an hero into the number of the gods, or celestial inhabitants.

To the same purpose he speaks a little after^p; "Therefore He made him (Adam) neither immortal nor mortal, but, as we said before^q, capable of either state, that keeping the command-

ⁱ [e. 14. p. 243.]

^k Amicitiam Dei immortalitatis esse condonatricem iis, qui aggrediuntur eam.

^l Igitur initio non quasi indigens Deus hominis plasmavit Adam, sed ut haberet in quem collocaret sua beneficia, &c. Servitus erga Deum Deo quidem nihil præstat, nec opus est Deo humano obsequio: ipse autem sequentibus et servantibus ei vitam et incorruptelam et gloriam æternam attribuit.

^m Dominus formavit et ad hoc præparavit nos, ut dum sumus eum eo, partici-

penus gloriæ ejus. Sic et Deus ab initio hominem quidem plasmavit propter suam munificentiam.

ⁿ Lib. ii. ad Autolye. p. 101. [e. 24. p. 366.]

^o Μετέθηκε δὲ αὐτὸν (Ἀδὰμ) ὁ Θεὸς ἐκ τῆς γῆς, ἐξ ἧς ἐγεγόνει, εἰς τὸν παράδεισον, διδοὺς αὐτῷ ἀφορμὴν προκοπῆς, ὅπως αὐξάνων καὶ τέλειος γενόμενος, ἔτι δὲ καὶ Θεὸς ἀνυδευχθεὶς, οὕτως καὶ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀναβῇ.

^p P. 103. [e. 27. p. 368.]

^q (P. 101.)

ment of God, he might gradually proceed unto, and by way of reward obtain immortality from Him, and so be consecrated or canonized^r."

5. Clemens of Alexandria^s, to this question of certain heretics in his time, (whether Adam was made perfect or imperfect? if imperfect, how the work of the perfect God came to be imperfect? but if perfect, how he happened to transgress the commandment of God?) thus answers, "Let them understand even from us, that he was not made perfect in his constitution, but apt to receive (perfect) virtue: for it is no small matter for man to be made apt or disposed to (perfect) virtue and the enjoyment thereof. But he would have us to be saved of ourselves^t." Where he plainly enough teacheth, that Adam was from the beginning not indeed made perfect, but yet endowed with the capacity (if I may so speak) whereby he might arrive to perfect virtue, and so to that eternal salvation which accompanies it. He explains his meaning more clearly presently after in pursuance of his answer to the same question in these words, "They are ignorant of the mysteries of God, that God created man to immortality, and made him the image of His own propriety; according to which propriety of Him that knoweth all things, he who is endowed with knowledge, and just and holy, doth by wisdom strive to attain unto the measure of the perfect age^u." And therefore in another place, speaking of the end to which in the gracious design of God man was at first created, he tells us, that he was "made for the contemplation of heaven, and a plant truly heavenly^x." Yet afterwards, in the same book^y, he thus writes, "O mystical miracle! The Lord is bowed down, and man is risen; and he that fell from paradise

^r Οὐτε οὖν ἀθάνατον αὐτὸν (Ἀδὰμ) ἐποίησεν, οὔτε μὴν θνητὸν, ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐπάνω προειρήκαμεν, δεκτικὸν ἀμφοτέρων· ἵνα βέβη ἐπὶ τὰ τῆς ἀθανασίας, τηρήσας τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ, μισθὸν κομίσηται παρ' αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀθανασίαν, καὶ γένηται Θεός. [lege ἵνα εἰ βέβη ed. Benedict.]

^s Stromat. vi. p. 662, 663. [c. 12. p. 788.]

^t Ἀκούονται γὰρ καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν, ὅτι τέλειος κατὰ τὴν κατασκευὴν οὐκ ἐγένετο, πρὸς δὲ τὸ ἀναδέξασθαι τὴν ὀρετὴν ἐπιτήδειος· διαφέρει γὰρ δὴ πού ἐπὶ τὴν ὀρετὴν γεγονέναι ἐπιτιθέσιον πρὸς τὴν

κτῆσιν αὐτῆς· ἡμᾶς δὲ ἐξ ἡμῶν αὐτῶν βούλεται· σώζεσθαι.

^u Οὐκ ἔγνωσαν μυστήρια Θεοῦ· ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς ἔκτισεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπὶ ἀφθαρσίᾳ, καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ἰδιότητος ἐποίησεν αὐτόν· καθ' ἣν ἰδιότητα τοῦ πάντα εἰδότης ὁ γνωστικὸς καὶ δίκαιος καὶ ὁσιος μετὰ φρονήσεως εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τελείας ἀφικνεῖσθαι σπεύδει.

^x Admon. ad Gent. p. 63. [p. 89] ἐπὶ τὴν οὐρανοῦ γενόμενον θέαν, φυτὸν οὐράνιον ὡς ἀληθῶς.

^y P. 69. [c. 11. p. 86.]

receives a greater reward of his obedience, even heaven^z." But these things agree very well together. For Clemens meant, that Adam was in possession only of the earthly paradise, and that from thence he fell; not denying in the mean while, but that if he had persisted in obedience, he should have been advanced to a higher felicity. And therefore others of the Fathers speak often after the same manner, whose most manifest opinion yet it is, that Adam, if he had not sinned, should have arrived to a celestial beatitude.

6. Tertullian^a tells us, that Adam was "by confession or repentance restored to his paradise^b;" manifestly shewing, that Adam was upon his repentance, by the mercy of the second covenant established in Christ the Mediator, restored to the same happiness, which he was designed to in the first covenant, and which by the violation thereof he had lost. This he expressly declares to be his opinion in his second book against Marcion^c, where, speaking of the creation of Adam, he tells us, That God in His goodness having designed man for the knowledge of Himself, did, before He made him, first prepare an habitation for him, even the great fabric of the visible world. "That in the great fabric, as in a lesser, he might give a proof or essay of his virtue and proficiency, and so be advanced from the good of God, that is, the great habitation, to God's best, that is, the greater habitation^d."

7. Methodius, (who is supposed to have flourished in the year of our Lord 255^e;) in his book entitled, Concerning the Things which have happened from the Beginning of the World, &c. about the beginning thereof, discoursing of the fall of our first parents by the temptation of the devil, hath these words; "The devil seeing himself banished out of heaven, yet remaining still in great power, bent his designs to displease God, and in all things to oppose Him. And because he saw the first man, to wit, Adam, placed with his wife in the earthly

^z Ω θαύματος μυστικοῦ! κέκλιται μὲν ὁ Κύριος, ἀνέστη δὲ ἄνθρωπος· καὶ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ παραδείσου πεσὼν μείζον ὑπακοῆς ἄλλον οὐρανὸς ἀπολαμβάνει.

^a De Pœnitent. cap. xii.

^b Exomologesi restitutus in paradisu suum.

^c C. I.

^d Ut in magna tanquam in minore proluderet atque proficeret, et ita de bono Dei, id est, de magno, ad optimum quoque ejus, id est, ad majus habitaculum promoveretur.

^e According to the Latin translation in the Orthodograph. S. Patrum, p. 100.

paradise, as in a place of pleasure, graced with innocence, and lord of all the beasts, fowls, and fishes, and withal, THAT HE WAS TO POSSESS THOSE HEAVENLY SEATS which he himself with his adherents had by pride lost, he was greatly troubled, and envying his happiness, designed to weaken, yea and utterly to destroy him^f."

8. St. Athanasius (De Incarnatione Verbi^g) amongst other things worthy of observation, concerning the primordial state of our first parents, (which hereafter we may have occasion to produce,) hath these words; "He brought them therefore (Adam and Eve) into His paradise, and gave them a law; that if they should preserve the grace, given then, and continue obedient, they might enjoy in paradise a life without grief, sorrow, or care; besides, THAT THEY HAD A PROMISE ALSO OF AN IMMORTALITY IN THE HEAVENS^h." Where he doth not mean that they had an express promise of such immortality; but that in the general promise, that if they continued obedient they should live for ever, a promise of such immortality was really in God's intention, and necessarily in the reason and nature of the thing included; which is most certain.

The same Athanasius a little after affirmsⁱ, that if the protoplast had kept the similitude of God entire, "he should have been afterwards made incorruptible, and consecrated to a celestial life^k."

9. St. Basil^l, describing in a florid discourse the envy of the devil, occasioned by the very great felicity of man in his first estate, hath these words; "He saw that the man-loving God was not content with his enjoyment of this earth, but that He

^f Videns autem diabolus se expulsum e cælo, in magna tamen potestate relictum, cogitavit quomodo posset displicere Deo, et in omnibus ipsi contrariari. Et quia vidit primum hominem, Adam scilicet, cum sua uxore in terrestri paradiso collocatum, scil. in locum voluptatis, innocentia decoratum, ac omnium bestiarum volatilium et piscium dominum, nec non possessurum in cælo sedes, quas ipse cum sibi adherentibus per superbiam amiserat, doluit vehementer: et invidens ejus felicitati, proposuit ipsum debellare et totaliter interficere.

^g P. 56. edit. Paris. 1627. [c. 3. p. 50.]

^h Εἰς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ γὰρ παράδεισον αὐτοὺς εἰσαγαγὼν, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς νόμον ἵνα εἰ μὲν φυλάττειεν τὴν χάριν, καὶ μένοιεν καλοὶ, ἔχωσι τὴν ἐν παραδείσῳ ἔλυσιν καὶ ἀνώδυνον καὶ ἀμέριμον ζωὴν, πρὸς τῷ καὶ τῆς ἐν οὐρανοῖς ἀφθαρσίας αὐτοὺς τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν ἔχειν.

ⁱ P. 57.

^k Ἀφθαρτος ὢν ἔζη λοιπὸν ὡς Θεός. [c. 4. p. 51.]

^l Homilia dicta in Lacizis, tom. i. p. 468. edit. Paris. 1638.

chose him as His proper delight, darling, and ornament, and placed him in paradise. The devil dealt maliciously when he saw the affluence of enjoyments, wherewith man was surrounded; the angels attending him as his tutors and guardians, and God Himself discoursing with him with His own voice, and in the same tongue or language; and the infant child on every side educated and instructed, that he might grow up into the similitude of God. When, I say, he understood and saw, that the Lord had called man, that silly animal, to a dignity equal with that of angels, training him up by virtue and sobriety of life to the perfection of his soul, he fell through envy^m," &c. He expresseth the same thing as fully, although in fewer words, in his Homily entitled, *Quod Deus non est Author Mali*ⁿ, thus, "(The devil) seeing himself cast down from the angelical society, could not endure to see the son of the earth (Adam) lifted up or exalted by proficiency in virtue to the dignity of angels^o."

The authors hitherto alleged are such as lived before the unhappy Pelagius was born to trouble the Church of God, and therefore their testimonies are the more considerable. And I can safely say, that I have not yet met with any approved author living before Pelagius, (although I have read some others of that antiquity, beside the writers produced,) who is of a contrary opinion. Nay, the ancient primitive Church was so certain of this truth, that she inserted the article into her public Offices and Prayers. For in the Liturgy of Clemens, (the most ancient now extant, and certainly elder than the Pelagian heresy by one whole age at least,) in the Prayer of Consecration of the Eucharist, we read these words concerning Adam, "When Thou broughtest him into the paradise of pleasure,

^m Εἶδεν ὅτι οὐκ ἠρέκεσθη ὁ φιλόανθρωπος Θεὸς τῇ τῆς γῆς ἀπολαύσει, ἀλλ' εἰς ἐξαίρετον ἐνδιαίτημα, τὸ ἴδιον ἐγκαλλώπισμα τὸν ἄνθρωπον αὐτοῦ βουλούμενος εἶναι, κατέστησεν εἰς τὸν παραδείσον. ἐπονηρεύσατο ὁ διάβολος ὁρῶν πολλὴν ἀπόλαυσιν περιβρέουσιν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἀγγέλους παιδαγωγικούς πορευομένους αὐτῷ. Θεὸν δούλωσσαν γινόμενον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, διαλεγόμενον ἀπὸ ἰδίας φωνῆς. πανταχόθεν τὸν παῖδα τὸν νήπιον παιδεύοντα, ἵνα εἰς Θεοῦ ὁμοίωσιν ἀναδράμῃ.

ἐπειδὴν κατέμαθε τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἐπειδὴν εἶδεν ὅτι τὸ μικρὸν τοῦτο ζῶον πρὸς τῶν ἀγγέλων ὁμοτιμίαν ὁ Κύριος προεκαλεῖτο, διὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀνάγων αὐτὸν, καὶ διὰ σωφροσύνης τῶν κατὰ τὸν βίον ἐπιτῆν τελείωσιν τῆς ψυχῆς, λείπει.

ⁿ Tom. i. p. 370.

^o Ὅρων γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐκ τῶν ἀγγέλων καταρρίφνεται, οἷς ἔφερε βλέπειν τὴν γῆν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀξίαν τῶν ἀγγέλων διὰ προκοπῆς ἀνοψόμενον.

Thou gavest him free leave to eat of all the other trees, and forbade him to taste of one only FOR THE HOPE OF BETTER THINGS; that if he kept the commandments, he might receive IMMORTALITY as the reward of his obedience^p."

If we come now to the Doctors of the Church that flourished after the Pelagian heresy arose, (as a comet portending direful effects to the Christian world,) it is confessed that they all maintained the same hypothesis: so that it would be a superfluous labour to shew the conveyance of this tradition through the several ages succeeding. Yet for our fuller satisfaction, I shall produce some testimonies also out of those authors, that are known to have been the chiefest antagonists of Pelagius; such as St. Augustin, Prosper, Fulgentius, and Petrus Diaconus.

10. St. Austin^q thus elegantly, as his manner was, discourseth, "For if God made the garments and shoes of the Israelites not to wax old for so many years, what wonder is it, if such a power were given to man obedient, that having an animal and mortal body, he should yet have a certain state therein, whereby it might last for a great number of years without decay; being himself, in God's due time, to pass from mortality to immortality, without death intervening^r?"

11. Prosper^s in the very beginning hath these words, "It were a sin to doubt of this, that the first man, in whom the nature of all men was concreated, was made upright and void of all sin, and that he received such a liberty of will, as that, if he forsook not God assisting him, he might continue in those good things which he had naturally received, because he would; and by the merit of voluntary obedience arrive to that bliss, wherein he neither would nor could fall away^t."

^p Constit. Apost. viii. 12. Εἰσαγαγὼν δὲ εἰς τὸν τῆς τρυφῆς παράδεισον, πάντων μὲν ἀνῆκας αὐτῷ τὴν ἐξουσίαν πρὸς μεταλήψιν, ἐνδὸς δὲ μόνου τὴν γεῦσιν ἀπέϊπας ἐπ' ἐλπίδι κρειττόνων ἵνα ἐὰν φυλάξῃ τὴν ἐντολὴν, μισθὸν ταύτης τὴν ἀθανάσιαν κομίσηται.

^q Lib. i. de Peccat. Merit. et Remiss. cap. 3. [vol. x. p. 3.]

^r Si enim Deus Israelitarum vestimentis et calcamentis præstitit, quod per tot annos non sunt obtrita; quid mirum si obedienti homini ejusmodi

potentia præstaretur, ut animale ac mortale habens corpus, haberet in eo quendam statum, quo sine defectu esset annosus, tempore quo Deus vellet, a mortalitate ad immortalitatem, sine media morte, venturus? Vide lib. xiii. de Civitat. Dei, cap. 1. et cap. 19. prope finem, where he asserts this doctrine to be *de fide Catholica*. [The words are, *quod fides Christiana prædicat*.]

^s Contra Collatorem, cap. 18. [c. 9. p. 327. ed. 1711.]

^t Rectum atque omni vitio carentem

12. Fulgentius^u layeth down certain principles of Catholic doctrine, *firmissime credenda*, “most firmly to be believed” by every man that hath not a mind “to bear the name of a Christian in vain, yea, to his own damnation^x ;” (the severity of which expression I approve not applied to all that which follows,) and amongst them this is one, “The good and just Creator prescribed to that man, whom He created in an animal body, and enriched with the gift of understanding and righteousness, a condition on both sides just and equal, viz. that if he kept his obedience, which is the prime virtue, he should from the animal quality of the body, wherein he was created, pass without the death of the body (because without any sin in his soul) to a spiritual and immortal state ; and should have received by the Divine gift, if he had kept the commandments, not only a perfect and never-failing immortality of the body, but also such a grace in the soul, of living holily and righteously, that from thenceforth he should not at all be able to sin, if he did not sin whilst he was able^y.”

Lastly, Petrus Diaconus^z speaks the same thing in fewer words, “Death and immortality were after a sort put into the hands of man’s free will and choice : for he was capable of both : so that if he kept the commandment, he should become immortal without tasting death ; but if he despised it, death should presently follow^a.”

I have made choice of these allegations out of a great abundance that might have been produced, because they are not only

creatum esse hominem primum, in quo omnium hominum concreata natura est, dubitare fas non est, cumque tale accepisse liberum arbitrium, ut si auxiliantem sibi Dominum non desereret, posset in bonis, quæ naturaliter acceperat, perseverare, quia vellet ; et merito voluntariæ perseverantiæ in eam beatitudinem pervenire, ut nec vellet decidere in deteriora, nec posset.

^u Ad Petrum Diac. Epist. xvii. c. 12. [p. 299. ed. 1684.]

^x Christianæ religionis inaniter, imo damnabiliter portare vocabulum.

^y A bono justoque Creatore illi homini, quem in corpore animali conditum ditavit intelligentiæ ac justitiæ dono, justa est utrimque statuta conditio, ut scil. si obedientiam. quæ pri-

maria virtus est, custodiret, ex animali in qua creatus erat corporis qualitate ad spirituales immortalesque statum sine corporis morte (quia sine animæ iniquitate) transiret, accepissetque divino munere, si præcepta servasset, non solum perfectam atque inamissibilem corporis immortalitatem, verum etiam in anima talem gratiam sancte justoque vivendi, ut peccare deinceps omnino non posset, si non peccaret, donec peccare potuisset.

^z De Gratia Christi, cap. 6.

^a Erat mors et immortalitas in ejus (Adami) posita quodammodo arbitrii libertate. Capax enim erat utriusque rei, ut si servaret præceptum, sine experientia mortis fieret immortalis : si vero contemneret, mors continuo sequeretur.

so many testimonies of what the Catholic Church of old thought in this controversy, but also suggest very evident reasons whereby the thing in question (laying aside the authority of the writers themselves) may be easily demonstrated. The reasons are two.

1. There is nothing more certain, as I have already shewn, than that our first parents, if they had never sinned, should never have died. Nor is it less certain, that the immortality, which obeying God they should have enjoyed, whilst they dwelt in this earth, and in the animal and earthly body, would have been adventitious, and above (yea, in some sort against) nature, that is, the natural tendency of such a body, and such as would have needed an extraordinary and peculiar care and providence of God for its sustentation. Now seeing we find, that the most wise God hath so ordered and appointed the course of things, that nothing which is violent useth to be perpetual, it necessarily follows, that our first parents, after they had given an experiment of their obedience, for such a space of time as God should think fit to appoint, should at length have passed into such a state, wherein the animal quality of their bodies being wholly laid aside, they should have possessed a natural, internal, and never-failing immortality; that is, an immortality properly so called. Read again the testimonies of Tatian, Theophilus Antiochenus, &c. St. Austin, Prosper, Fulgentius, and Petrus Diaconus.

2. It seems most absurd to affirm, that man, being a creature endowed with liberty of will, and so capable of reward and punishment according to his good or ill behaviour, should presently upon his creation have obtained his ultimate end. It was necessary, no doubt, that man should first be a *viator*, as the schools speak, and then a *comprehensor*; be put *in stadio*, "in the race," before he arrived *ad metam*, "to the goal;" and, in a word, give a specimen of his virtue and obedience before he received his reward. The first man, therefore, had not obtained his ultimate felicity, when presently upon his creation he was placed in the earthly paradise, but was only put in such a state, wherein (matter and occasion of proficiency being on every side ministered to him) he might tend, and by degrees proceed and go forward to a farther and higher beatitude. This reason all

the testimonies we have alleged universally insinuate. The coldness, therefore, and indifferency of Grotius in this question, is no way commendable, who speaking of Adam hath these words; "What God would have done with him if he had continued obedient, I dispute not; I willingly leave every man to his own judgment in this matter^b." For certainly it is very unreasonable, that every man should be allowed the liberty of opining as he pleaseth, in a question already determined by so universal a consent of the Catholic Doctors, and that too upon reasons so evident.

Let us now proceed to the demonstration of the other hypothesis, viz. That our first parents, besides the seeds of natural virtue and religion sown in their minds, in their very creation, and besides the natural innocence and rectitude wherein also they were created, were endowed moreover with certain gifts and powers supernatural, infused by the Spirit of God; and that in these gifts their perfection consisted.

This indeed, as I have already noted, is a consequent of the former hypothesis; for the means ought to be proportioned and suited to the end. If therefore our first parents had been designed only to a natural, *i. e.* earthly felicity, a supernatural gift would have been useless, or at least unnecessary to them; for "a means of a superior order is in vain required for the obtaining of an inferior end^c." And so, on the contrary, if the protoplasts be supposed to have been designed to a supernatural, *i. e.* celestial bliss, it necessarily follows, that they were furnished with powers suited to the obtaining of such an end; that is, supernatural. Yet because all men perhaps are not able to discern the necessity of this consequence, and because this latter hypothesis is chiefly questioned by learned men, I shall not refuse the labour of proving this assertion also out of the writings of the ancients, and that somewhat more copiously than I have done the former.

Justin Martyr, who flourished "in the first succession of the Apostles^d," and that about the middle thereof, in his Epistle to

^b Votum pro Pace, p. 19. Quid de eo facturis fuisset Deus, si obedire perstisset, non disputo; libenter hac in re suum cuique relinquo iudicium.

^c Ad finem inferiorem frustra assu-

mitur medium ex ordine superiori.

^d Ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ διαδοχῇ τῶν ἀποστόλων. [Eus. E. H. iii. 37. By "the middle thereof" is probably meant the middle of the second century.]

Diognetus^e, speaking of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life, said to be planted together in the midst of paradise, and giving an allegorical sense of the text, hath these remarkable words; “For those things are not without signification which are written, that God in the beginning planted the tree of life in the midst of paradise, pointing out the way to life by knowledge; of which knowledge our first parents not making a holy use, were by the imposture of the serpent stripped and divested. For neither is there life without knowledge, nor sure or certain knowledge without true life, and therefore both (trees) were planted near together^f.” There is nothing more evident, than that the blessed Martyr, by the knowledge he here attributes to the first man in the state of integrity, means not mere natural reason, or any effect thereof, but some supernatural gift or effect of the Spirit. For, 1. He speaks expressly of such a sure and certain knowledge, which retained, is inseparably accompanied with true, that is, eternal life. 2. He affirms Adam to have been stripped or divested of this knowledge by his sin^g. But sure the protoplast did not by his sin lose his reason, or cease to be a man. 3. The very metaphor the Father useth, of being stripped, or divested, shews he speaks of something extrinsical and adventitious to the nature of man, such as is a garment to the body; and not of any thing essential or natural to man. But what need of many words? They that are any whit acquainted with the language of antiquity, know very well that *γνώσις* and *φρόνησις* among the Greek Fathers, and *cognitio* and *sapientia* among the Latins, when attributed to man in the state of integrity, are constantly used to express that whole complexion of supernatural virtues, (of which, Divine illumination or knowledge is the leading grace,) wherewith he was in that state adorned, and to which, being lost through sin, he is restored by the Spirit in regeneration^h.

Tatian, the scholar of Justin, explains his master’s meaning very clearly in many places of his Oration against the Greeks.

^e P. 502. [c. ult. p. 240.]

^f Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἄσημα τὰ γεγραμμένα, ὡς θεὸς ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς ἐύλογον ζωῆς ἐν μέσῳ παραδείσου ἐφύτευσε, διὰ γνώσεως ζωὴν ἐπιδεικνύς· ἢ μὴ καθαρῶς χρησάμενοι οἱ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, πλάνη τοῦ ὕφους γεγίμνωνται· οὐδὲ γὰρ ζωὴ ἀνευ γνώσεως, οὐδὲ γινῶσις

ἀσφαλὴς ἀνευ ζωῆς ἀληθοῦς· διὸ πλησίον ἑκάτερον πεφύτευται.

^g Philo Judæus, Alleg. l. ii. p. 70, says, that our first parents were after their sin γύμνοι σοφίας.

^h See Col. iii. 10.

Thus, p. 146, 147. [c. 7. p. 249.] “After that men had followed a certain (Spirit) more subtle and cunning, because of greater age and experience than the rest, and held him for a god, that opposed himself to the Divine law; then the POWER OF THE WORD deprived both the author of this madness, and the men that followed him, of His familiarity and friendship; and he that was made after the image of God, that more POWERFUL SPIRIT withdrawing from him, became mortalⁱ.” So p. 150, [c. 12. p. 253.] he declares the common doctrine of the Christians in his time, in these words; “We (Christians) acknowledge two kinds of spirits, whereof the one is called the soul, the other is more excellent than the soul, as being the very image and similitude of God; now both these were given to the first men^k.” Where by the “first men,” he undoubtedly means Adam and Eve, but he names them not, as speaking to the heathens, that were ignorant of the history of the creation delivered by Moses. Again, p. 152, [c. 13. p. 255.] he hath these words; “The Spirit was at the beginning familiar to the soul, but because it would not follow the Spirit, it was forsaken by it. So that now the soul, although it still retain as it were a certain fuel, apt to be kindled by the power of the same Spirit, yet by reason of the withdrawing thereof, not being able thoroughly to discern the things that are perfect, in seeking after the one God it hath framed to itself many gods^l.” To conclude our testimonies out of this most ancient writer, p. 153. [c. 15. p. 256.] of the same Oration, he expresseth this matter, briefly yet fully in these words; “It remains that we now seek and endeavour after the recovery of that again, which we once had, but lost, viz. the conjunction of our souls with the Holy Spirit, and a union with God^m.”

ⁱ Καὶ ἐπειδὴ τινι φρονιματέρῳ παρὰ τοὺς λοιποὺς ὄντι διὰ τὸ πρωτόζυνον συνεξηκολοίθησαν, καὶ θεὸν ἀνεδείξαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, καὶ τὸν ἐπαιτιττάμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ, τότε ἡ τοῦ λόγου δύναμις, τὸν τε ἄρξαντα τῆς ἀπονύας, καὶ τοὺς συνακολουθήσαντας τούτῳ, τῆς σὺν αὐτῷ διαίτης παρητήσατο· καὶ ὁ μὲν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ Θεοῦ γεγονὼς χωριθέντος ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ Πνεύματος τοῦ δυνατωτέρου, θνητὸς γίνεται.

^k Δύο πνευμάτων διαφοράς ἴσμεν ἡμεῖς, ὧν τὸ μὲν καλεῖται ψυχὴ· τὸ δὲ μέζον μὲν τῆς ψυχῆς, Θεοῦ δὲ εἰκὼν καὶ

ὁμολογίαι· ἐις αὐτὰ δὲ παρὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τοῖς πρώτοις ὑπῆρχεν.

^l Γέγονε μὲν οὖν συνδύαιτον ἀρχῇθεν τὸ πνεῦμα τῇ ψυχῇ· τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ταύτην ἐπεσθαι μὴ βυυλομένην αὐτῇ, καταλέλυται· ἡ δὲ ὥσπερ ἔναυσμα τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ κεκτημένη, καὶ διὰ τὴν χωρισμὸν τὰ τέλει καθαροῦ μὴ δυνομένη, ζητοῦσα τὸν Θεόν, πολλοὺς θεοὺς ἀνετύπωσε.

^m Καὶ χρὴ λοιπὸν ἡμᾶς ὑπερ' ἔχοντες ἀπολωλέκομεν, τοῦτο νῦν ἀναζητεῖν, ζευγνῦναι τε τὴν ψυχὴν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ, καὶ τὴν κατὰ Θεὸν συζυγίαν πραγματεῖσθαι.

Irenæusⁿ professedly undertakes to prove that the first man was not made a perfect man, or according to the likeness of God, by a reasonable soul and a human body only, without the addition of a “third principle,” viz. the Divine Spirit. Where amongst many other things he hath these words; “When the Spirit is mingled with the soul, and (both) united to the body, by the effusion of the same Spirit, man becomes spiritual and perfect; and this is the man that was made after the image and likeness of God. But if the Spirit be wanting to the soul, he that is such is indeed animal and carnal, and being so left is imperfect^o.” Presently, after having reckoned up these three principles, the body, the soul, and the Divine Spirit, he adds, “the mixture and union of all these together make up a perfect man^p.” Where if any man be stumbled at Irenæus’s affirming, that he who is void of the Spirit is but part of a man, not a perfect man, let him remember, that man may be considered in a double order or relation.

1. In relation to the natural, animal, and earthly life. And so he is a perfect man, that hath only a reasonable soul and a body adapted thereunto; for the powers and faculties of these are sufficient to the exercise of the functions and operations belonging to such a life.

But, 2. Man may be considered in order to a supernatural end, and as designed to a spiritual and celestial life; and of this life the Spirit of God is the principle. For man’s natural powers and faculties, even as they were before the fall entire, were not sufficient or able of themselves to reach such a supernatural end, but needed the power of the Divine Spirit to strengthen, elevate, and raise them thereunto. He that denies this, opposeth himself against the stream and current of the Holy Scriptures, and the consent of the Catholic Church, and must betake himself into the tents of Pelagius. Therefore to the perfect constitution of man, considered in this relation, a reasonable soul and a body adapted thereunto are not sufficient; but there is necessarily required a union of the Divine Spirit

ⁿ Lib. v. cap. 6.

^o Cum Spiritus commixtus animæ unitur plasmati, propter effusionem Spiritus, spiritualis et perfectus homo factus est: et hic est qui secundum imaginem et similitudinem factus est

Dei. Si autem defuerit animæ Spiritus, animalis est vere, qui est talis, et carnalis derelictus imperfectus erit, &c.

^p Commixtio autem et unio horum omnium perfectum hominem efficit.

with both, as it were a third essential principle. This, as it is a certain truth, so it is a great mystery in Christianity, which would deserve a larger discourse for its explanation than this place will admit of. We therefore proceed. The same Irenæus^a, by a fiction of person, introduceth Adam after his fall thus acknowledging his sin and misery; "That robe of sanctity or holiness which I had from the Spirit, I have lost by disobedience, &c.^r."

The author of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy (whoever he were) speaketh thus^s, "Mankind having from the beginning fallen through foolishness FROM THE DIVINE GOOD THINGS, received a life obnoxious to many passions, and which was to be terminated in death and corruption^t." Therefore Adam had, beside his naturals entire, certain divine good things, which he lost to himself and us by his sin and folly.

Tertullian^u tells us, that Adam upon his sin "was no longer wise to God, was no longer able to bear heavenly things^x." Therefore, before he sinned he was endowed with a divine wisdom, and capable of heavenly things, and so was not in a merely natural or animal state and condition. But we need not thus pick out the meaning of the Father from such single expressions dropping from him by the by, for he expressly and fully owns this doctrine^y, where, speaking of the regeneration of man by Baptism, he hath these words; "Thus man is restored to God, and to his likeness, who was before made after God's image, &c. For he receives again the Spirit of God, which he then had by his inspiration, but afterwards lost by sin^z."

Cyprian^a delivers the same doctrine in these words; "He shews and teaches the regenerate to be then consummated, when the patience of God the Father remains in us, when the Divine similitude, which Adam lost by his sin, is manifested, and shines

^a Lib. iii. cap. 37. [cap. 23, 5. p. 221.]

^r Eam quam habui a Spiritu sanctitatis stolam amisi per inobedientiam, &c.

^s C. iii. §. 11. p. 296.

^t Τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀρχῇθεν ἀπὸ τῶν θείων ἀγαθῶν ἀνοήτως ἐξολισθήσαν, ἡ πολυπαθεστάτη ζωὴ διαδέχεται, καὶ τοῦ φθοροποιῦ θανάτου πέρας.

^u De Patientia, cap. 5.

^x Desivit Deo sapere, desivit ecclesia sustinere 1 ossc.

^y De Baptismo, cap. 5.

^z Ita restituitur homo Deo ad similitudinem ejus, qui retro ad imaginem Dei conditus fuerat, &c. Recipit enim illum Dei Spiritum, quem tunc de afflatu ejus acceperat, sed post amiserat per delictum.

^a De Bono Patientiæ.

in our actions. What a glory is it to be made like unto God! What and how great felicity, to have those virtues, which may equal the Divine praises^b! Where he manifestly places the perfection of that Divine similitude, which Adam had, but lost by his sin, in those divine and supernatural virtues, to which we are restored by the heavenly birth, and which we receive from Christ the second Adam. Afterwards, in the same Sermon, he tells us, that “Adam being impatiently desirous of the deadly food, against the heavenly commandment, became liable to death; nor did he by patience keep THE GRACE RECEIVED FROM GOD^c.” So in his seventy-fourth Epistle, Ad Pompeium, he interprets the words of the Scripture spoken of Adam^d, “And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,” concerning the grace of the Holy Ghost infused by God into the first man. Which exposition is followed by very many others of the Fathers.

Nor is it so absurd a gloss, as at first appearance it may seem to be. For these Fathers meant not this so^e, as if Adam in the insufflation did not receive his soul, or the principle of his natural life, but that this was not all that he then received. For they believed, that together with his soul, or the principle of his natural life, he received also the grace of the Holy Spirit, as a principle of the divine life, to which he was also designed; that is, that God did not send the pure and immaculate soul of the first man unto his body naked, but stamped all the *προσγιγνόμενον ἁγίου Πνεύματος χαρακτηριστικὸν ἰδῶμα*, that Clemens Alexandrinus speaks of, *i. e.* “the characteristic propriety of the Holy Spirit superadded^f.” Thus St. Basil expressly comparing the divine insufflation upon Adam with that of Christ^g upon the Apostles, tells us^h, that it was the same Son of God “ⁱ by Whom God gave the insufflation, then

^b Sic consummari ostendit et docuit cœlesti nativitate reparatos, si patientia Dei Patris maneat in nobis, si similitudo divina quam peccato Adam perdidit, manifestetur et luceat in actionibus nostris. Quæ gloria est similem Deo fieri? Qualis et quanta felicitas, habere in virtutibus quod divinis laudibus possit æquari? [p. 248.]

^c Adam contra cœleste præceptum cibi lethalis impatiens in mortem cecidit: nec acceptam divinitus gratiam patientia

custode servavit. [p. 253.]

^d Gen. ii. 7.

^e In which sense alone St. Austin opposeth this interpretation as grossly absurd. De Civit. Dei, xiii. 24.

^f Strom. vi. p. 681. [c. 16. p. 808.]

^g John xx. 22.

^h Lib. v. con. Eunom. 119. [vol. i. p. 304.]

ⁱ Δι' οὗ Θεὸς δέδωκε τὴν ἐμφύσησιν· τότε μὲν μετὰ ψυχῆς, νῦν δὲ εἰς ψυχὴν.

indeed together with the soul, but now into the soul." And this is no more than what many of the schoolmen affirm, that Adam was *creatus in gratia*, "created in grace^k," i. e. received a principle of grace and divine life from his very creation, or in the moment of the infusion of his soul, of which for mine own part I little doubt. For we find this notion not only in the ancient writers of the Christian Church, but to have been known also to the Church of the Jews in our Saviour's time, and before; and supposed by them to be the recondite sense of the text before alleged out of Gen. ii. 7. I will give you a most illustrious testimony for this out of Philo Judæus, who lived near the time of our Saviour, yea part of it, and who seems to me to have first opened the rich treasure of the more mysterious learning of the Jews, and to have exposed it in the common tongue to the knowledge of the Gentiles; although, I confess, with the addition of some dross of his own.

Thus therefore he, discoursing upon the forementioned text^l; "These words do also discover a certain secret of nature. For there are three things here required, the thing inspiring, the thing that receives the inspiration, and the thing received by the inspiration. That which inspires is God, that which receives the inspiration is the mind, and the thing received by the inspiration is the Spirit. What therefore is the result of this? There is a union of these three things, whilst God doth exert from Himself a certain power, which by nerves of the Spirit reacheth to the subject receiving it. And to what other purpose, than that hereby we might attain the notion of Him? otherwise how could the soul have known God, unless Himself had first inspired and touched it according to its capacity? For the mind of man durst not have aspired so high, as to attempt the knowledge of God's nature, unless God Himself had raised it up to Himself, as far as it was capable of being so raised^m."

^k Ab initio creationis virtus, quæ vitam ministrat, simul cum Spiritu S. ingressa erat in hominem, ut hæc creatura foret secundum imaginem Dei, quasi unus reciperet utrumque. Nam impossibile est, ut intellectus noster gestet imaginem Dei, si non fuerit illuminatus a Spiritu S. &c. Igitur anima a primordio suæ creationis vitalem vim et Spiritum S. pariter naeta est.

Procop. ad cap. i. Genes. p. 42. edit. Tigur.

^l Gen. ii. 7.

^m Allegor. l. i. p. 47. Ἐμφανίζει δὲ τὴν καὶ φυσικώτερον ἢ προφορὰν. τρία γὰρ εἶναι δεῖ· τὸ ἐμπνέον, τὸ δεχόμενον, τὸ ἐμπνεόμενον· τὸ μὲν οὖν ἐμπνέον, ἐστὶν ὁ Θεός· τὸ δὲ δεχόμενον, ὁ νοῦς· τὸ δὲ ἐμπνεόμενον, τὸ Πνεῦμα· τί οὖν ἐκ τούτων συνάγεται; ἔνωσις γίνεται τῶν τριῶν,

In these words the whole of that, which the Christian writers assert concerning the state of the first man, is comprehended. For here, 1. We have beside and above the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, or highest natural faculty of man, his mind, a faculty superadded, viz. of the Divine Spirit. For that the νοῦς here signifies the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, appears from the express words of Philo presently following, “The ruling and highest faculty of the soul is the mind; this only God inspiresⁿ.” 2. It is affirmed here, that Adam received this divine principle in his very creation, at the same time when his natural soul was breathed into him. 3. He tells us, that the first man had this divine principle given to him, that thereby he might be raised to the saving knowledge of God, which otherwise he could not have reached unto by his natural powers. Put these things together, and what do they amount to more or less than what the Christian writers have taught us, viz. that Adam in his very creation received a supernatural principle in order to a supernatural end; and that this is the mystical sense of those words, Gen. ii. 7.

Nor did this notion drop from Philo unawares, or by the by, or was screwed out of the text to serve his present purpose; for he frequently inculcates the very same thing, not only in his Allegories, but in his other writings. And it were easy to allege other Jewish writers delivering the same notion with Philo. Hiskuni in his commentary tells us, that “God did with His own inspiration, which is the Holy Ghost, breathe into man^o.” And it will be apparent to any man that considers that this is the very meaning of the threefold distinction of the powers of the soul, frequently occurring in the Jewish rabbins, into נפש the “living soul,” רוח the “spirit,” or the rational soul, and נשמה the “inspiration” or the Divine *afflatus*, which Adam received in his creation. For although some of the latter rabbins, too ignorant of the degeneracy of man’s nature by Adam’s sin, and divers learned men, as Drusius, Grotius, and others, being misled by them, tell us, that *Nesama* in this distinction

τείνοντος τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ δύναμιν διὰ τοῦ μέσου Πνεύματος ἄχρι τοῦ υποκειμένου. τίνος ἕνεκα, ἢ ὅπως ἐννοίαν αὐτοῦ λάβωμεν; ἐπεὶ πῶς ἂν ἐνόησεν ἡ ψυχὴ Θεόν, εἰ μὴ ἐνέπνευσε καὶ ἤψατο αὐτῆς κατὰ δύναμιν; οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἐπετόλη-
μησε τοσοῦτον ἀναδραμεῖν ὁ ἀνθρώπινος

νοῦς, ὡς ἀντιλαβεσθαι Θεοῦ φύσεως, εἰ μὴ αὐτὸς ὁ Θεὸς ἀνέσπασεν αὐτὸν πρὸς αὐτὸν, ὡς ἐνὶ ἀνθρώπινον νοῦν ἀνασπασθῆναι.

ⁿ Ψυχῆς ἡγεμονικόν ἐστιν ὁ νοῦς· τοῦτ᾽ ἐμπεῖς ὁ Θεός.

^o Cum inspiratione sua, quæ est Spiritus Sanctus, inspiravit Deus in hominem.

signifies no more than the intelligent or rational soul, yet it is manifest enough from what hath been said, that the *Nesama* signifies some supernatural power distinct from and above the highest natural faculty or power in man, the same with the *Πνεῦμα* in Philo, and that the τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, or highest natural faculty in man, is in this distinction comprehended in the word *Ruach*, or "Spirit." If it be objected, that the ancient Jews and Christians did groundlessly imagine this sense in the text forementioned, because after the mention of the insufflation it presently follows, "and man became a living soul," intimating that this was all the man received by this insufflation, the answer is easy, that this argument, if it proves any thing, proves too much, viz. that the first man by the Divine insufflation received no more than what is in every brute, viz. a living soul. But all sober Divines acknowledge, that there was given to man in the insufflation something more than such a soul, viz. an intelligent and rational soul. And why not then this intelligent soul, impressed with the Divine character, and touched with the virtue of the Holy Spirit, as the ancient Jews and Christians generally believed, taught this (I little doubt) from the prophetic Cabala, which being first received among the Jews was from them derived into the Christian Church? It hath been observed by many learned interpreters, both ancient and modern, that Moses, in the history of the creation, meddles not with things spiritual and incorporeal, (and therefore wholly omits the creation of Angels,) but describes only such things as fall under sense. And so accordingly in this instance, having mentioned the Divine insufflation into the first man, in the following words he describes only the more sensible effect of that insufflation, viz. that thereby the dead lump of man's body was animated and empowered to the actions of life and sense. But he that should hence imagine that this was the entire effect of that insufflation, would thereby discover himself to be a very dull soul, and really as brutish as he fancies the very first man to have been made. Moreover in these words, "and man became a living soul," is signified, that the effect of this insufflation as to the body of man was only this, that thereby it received the animal life, and so was in its own nature mortal, as the bodies of the other animals are, and that it had not yet received that vivific power in itself,

whereby it was made immortal and incorruptible, as our bodies in the resurrection shall be, as St. Paul discourseth, 1 Cor. xv. 42; of which more anon.

He that shall attend to these things will be easily persuaded, that the notion of Irenæus above mentioned, asserting that man is not perfect in his constitution, without the divine principle of the Spirit, was no idle fancy, or dream of his, but a real, although mysterious, truth, as being acknowledged by the wiser Jews before Christ, and from them derived into the Christian Churches planted by the Apostles. For he means no more than this, that man void of the Spirit wants the *Nesama*, (as the latter rabbins speak,) or the *Πνεῦμα*, (as Philo termeth it,) which the first man received in his creation, in order to a supernatural life. And perhaps from hence also you may gather the right sense of those words of St Paul^o, where speaking to Christians, (who are supposed to have recovered that in the second Adam which they had lost in the first,) he mentions these three principles in them, the “Spirit,” the “soul,” and the “body.” Indeed many learned interpreters tell us here, that St. Paul alludes to the threefold distinction of the soul, into the “vegetative,” the “sensitive,” and the “rational,” and so that the “Spirit” in St. Paul signifies no more than the *τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν*, or “mind.” But it seems plain to me, that the Apostle meddles not with the threefold faculty of man’s soul, (for what hath the body to do in that distinction?) but rather describes the threefold principle of the *compositum*, if I may so speak, of a Christian, (which St. Paul calls the *ὁλόκληρον*,) who besides his body and soul, which make him a perfect natural man, hath also the *Πνεῦμα*, the Spirit, (that Philo speaks on,) to render him a perfect man in order to a supernatural life.

It is a weak argument that Didymus of old objected against this interpretation; “It is incredible and even blasphemous to imagine, that the Apostle should pray that the Spirit might be preserved entire, (in the Thessalonians,) who is not capable either of mutation or augmentation^p.” For I beseech you, doth not the same Apostle tell us, that the Spirit may be “grieved^q,”

^o 1 Thess. v. 23.

^p Incredible atque blasphemum, orare Apostolum ut Spiritus S. integer servetur, qui nec immutationem potest recipere nec profectum.

^q Eph. iv. 30.

yea and “quenched^r?” And is it not manifest, that in those texts he speaks of the Divine Spirit, or some effect thereof? The meaning therefore of the Apostle in such cases is clearly this; That the Divine Spirit given by God must be carefully preserved and cherished by prayer and obedience to His dictates, and avoiding every thing that is offensive to Him, or else God may justly, and will certainly deprive us of the same. And thus Irenæus^s interprets the place under consideration; and thus the Greek Fathers generally by the Spirit understand the *χάρισμα*, or “gift.” Read carefully Grotius’s annotation upon the place. Nay, St. Paul seems to interpret himself very expressly in another place^t, exhorting the Ephesians^u “to be renewed by (for so I would translate it, and not *in*) the Spirit of their mind.” Where Chrysostom gives us this paraphrase of the words, “by the Spirit which is in their minds^x.” Modern interpreters indeed tell us, that the Apostle by “the Spirit of the mind” means no more than “the Spirit which is the mind.” But who sees not how flat and dull an interpretation this is? Is it not much more reasonable to imagine, that the Apostle, being a Jew, and trained up at the feet of Gamaliel in the more mysterious Jewish learning, speaks here the language of the wiser and more learned Jews that were before him? Now they, as we have seen, beside and above the *νοῦς*, or highest natural faculty in man’s soul, believed another principle necessary in order to a supernatural life, viz. the Divine Spirit; and that this Divine Spirit immediately affects only the *νοῦς*, (and so is fitly termed *Πνεῦμα τοῦ νοῦς*,) being from thence derived into the inferior faculties, as we but now heard out of Philo. I say it is very reasonable thus to interpret the text, especially seeing it is manifest that St. Paul, in discoursing of other mysteries of the Christian religion, and those of the greatest importance, hath the same common notions and phrases too with Philo and other Jews which were before him; which I could easily demonstrate in many instances, if this were a proper place for it. By the help then of this Spirit in their minds, the Apostle exhorts the Ephesians to be “renewed,” or to “put on the new man,” i. e.

^r 1 Thess. v. 19.

^s Lib. v. 6.

^t Viz. Eph. iv. 23.

^u Ἀνανεοῦσθαι τῷ Πνεύματι τοῦ νοῦς.

^x Τῷ Πνεύματι τῷ ἐν τῇ νῷ.

to acquire those gracious qualities of righteousness and true holiness, wherein that new man consists, which (he adds) was created “after God,” that is, “after God’s image,” according to which the first man was made, who had in his creation given him that Spirit, that *Nesama* in his mind, but lost it by his sin and folly.

In a word, that the first man in his creation received the Spirit of God, and that in order to a celestial life, or the attainment of the beatific vision, (which is the doctrine of the ancient Christian writers,) the same Philo in another place expressly teacheth. For in his book^z, speaking of Adam before his fall, he hath these most remarkable words; “Having much of the Divine Spirit flowing in upon him, he studied both to do and speak all things so as to please his Father and King, treading on His footsteps in that highway of virtue, which was chalked out unto him, and in which those souls alone may walk, whose aim and end it is to attain at length an assimilation to that God that begat them^a.” Here we have Adam supposed in his creation to be furnished with supernatural powers, viz. a copious measure of the Divine Spirit, and that in order to a supernatural end, the being made like unto God, which is attainable only by the beatific vision. And I know not where we can find in the writings of the Christian Doctors a testimony more clearly asserting the truth I contend for, than this of Philo.—You will now, I presume, easily pardon this large digression, being in itself not unuseful, and being also necessary to remove a stone of offence, often cast in the way of the reader that converseth with the writings of the ancient Fathers.

Nay moreover I shall persuade myself, that from this one instance (among many) you will learn from henceforth the modesty of submitting your judgment to that of the Catholic Doctors, where they are found generally to concur in the interpretation of a text of Scripture, how absurd soever that inter-

^z It is the same thing the Apostle means in the phrase Πνεύματι τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος θανατοῦν, Rom. viii. 13. where it is manifest from the whole context, that by “the Spirit” is meant the Divine Spirit, or the Spirit of Christ. See especially ver. 16.

^a De Mundi Opificio, p. 33.

^a Πολλοῦ ῥέντος εἰς αὐτὸν τοῦ θείου Πνεύματος, πάντα καὶ λέγειν καὶ πράττειν ἐσπούδαζεν εἰς ἀρέσκειαν τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ Βασιλέως, ἐπόμενος αὐτῷ κατ’ ἵχνος ταῖς ὁδοῖς, ὥς ὡς λεωφόρους ἀνατέμνουσιν ἀρετὰι δι’ ὧν μόνοις ψυχαῖς θέμις προσέρχεσθαι, τέλος ἡγουμέναις τὴν πρὸς τὸν γεννήσαντα Θεὸν ἐξομοίωσιν.

pretation may at first appearance seem to be. For upon a diligent search you will find, that *aliquid latet, quod non patet*, “there is a mystery in the bottom;” and that what at the first view seemed even ridiculous, will afterwards appear to be a most important truth. Let them therefore, who, reading the Fathers, are prone to laugh at that in them which they do not presently understand, seriously consider, *quanto suo periculo id faciant*. And so let us proceed in our citations.

Origen^b, after that he had sufficiently refuted the gross and profane conceits of Celsus, that great disciple of Epicurus, concerning the image of God, after which the first man is said to be created^c, thus (as it were delivering the common sentiment of the Christians of his time) concludes his discourse; “It remains, that the image of God be placed in the inward man, (as we call it,) which is renewed and fitted to represent the image of his Creator; so that we are to conceive this to be the image of God, when a man becomes perfect, as the heavenly Father is perfect, and obeys the voice of God, ‘Be ye holy, as the Lord your God is holy:’ and when learning that lesson, ‘Be ye followers of God,’ he receives into his well-disposed soul the characters of God^d.”

From which words it is plain, that Origen (with the Christians of his time) thought, that the perfection of the Divine image, after which Adam is said to be created, consisted in holiness and supernatural virtues, and in those characters of God, which were impressed on his soul. Read that which follows in Origen.

The author of the five dialogues, amongst the works of Athanasius, (which the famous Scultetus judgeth to be the work of a very learned writer, and highly worth our reading,) doth frequently deliver the same doctrine, but especially in his third dialogue between Macedonius and the orthodox or Catholic Christian. So^e he takes it for granted, that Adam could not be

^b Cont. Cels. l. vi. p. 319. edit. Cantabrig. 1658. [c. 63. p. 681.]

^c Gen. i. 27.

^d Λέγεται δὴ τὸ κατ’ εἰκόνα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν τῷ καθ’ ἡμᾶς λεγομένῳ ἔσω ἀνθρώπῳ, καὶ ἀνακαινουμένῳ, καὶ πεφυκότι γίγνεσθαι κατ’ εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος νοεῖσθαι τὸ κατ’ εἰκόνα ὅτε γίνεταί τις τέλειος, ὡς ὁ

Πατήρ ὁ οὐράνιος τέλειός ἐστι· καὶ ἀκούει ὅτι Ἅγιοι ἔσεσθε, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἅγιος Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ὑμῶν· καὶ μανθάνων τὸ, Μιμηταὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ γίνεσθε, ἀναλαμβάνει εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐνάρετον ψυχὴν τοὺς χαρακτῆρας τοῦ Θεοῦ.

^e P. 225. [c. 16. p. 516.]

said to be made after the image of God, "if he had not been sanctified by the Spirit of holiness^f." And presently after we find the Macedonian and the Catholic Christian thus discoursing; "MAC. Are not therefore all men made after the image of God? ORTHOD. Sinners are not; but they that mortify the deeds of the flesh, and put on the new man created after God, these only have the image of God. For such was Adam before his transgression^g." Where, when he denies wicked men to have the image of God in them, he is to be understood of the perfection of the Divine image which wicked men want, who in the mean time retain those lineaments of the image which are implanted in the nature of man, such as the power of understanding, and the liberty of willing, and that dominion over the other creatures which is founded thereon: of which more hereafter. The same author a little after; "We see that man, created after the image of God, was endued with the cooperation of the Spirit^h." So p. 226. [p. 517.] he takes this for a thing universally granted amongst all Christians, "that Adam in paradise was holyⁱ;" yea, and so created, as it presently follows.

But let us hear the true and undoubted Athanasius. In him also this notion frequently occurs. I shall produce one most illustrious testimony out of him, which may be *instar omnium*. In his oration, entitled De Incarnatione Verbi^k, you may read him thus excellently discoursing concerning the original state and condition of the first man; "God created all things out of nothing by His WORD, our Lord Jesus Christ. But above all His creatures, He was most abundant in His mercy to mankind: for considering that they were not able to subsist for ever by the condition of their nature, he freely bestowed on them SOMETHING GREATER THAN IT, and did not simply create mankind as he did other brute animals upon earth, but made them after His own image, imparting to them also the virtue or POWER OF

^f Μὴ ἁγιασθεὶς τῷ Πνεύματι τῆς ἁγιότητος.

^g ΜΑΚ. Οὐκ ἐσμὲν οὖν πάντες κατ' εἰκόνα; ΟΡΘ. Οἱ ἁμαρτάνοντες, οὐ· οἱ δὲ τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος θανατοῦντες, καὶ ἐνδιδυσκόμενοι τὸν καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, τὸν κατὰ Θεὸν κτισθέντα, ἔχουσι τὸ κατ'

εἰκόνα· τοιοῦτος γὰρ ἦν ὁ Ἀδὰμ πρὸ τῆς παρακοῆς.

^h Τὸν κτισθέντα ἄνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα μετὰ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος συνεργείας ὀρώμεν ὄντα.

ⁱ Ὅτι ὁ Ἀδὰμ ἐν παραδείσῳ ἅγιος ἦν.

^k Tom. I. p. 56. [c. 3. p. 19.]

HIS OWN WORD, that having, as it were, certain shadows and lineaments of that Word, and being made partakers thereof, they might be able to persevere in blessedness, living in paradise a true life, even the life of the holy Angels. And again, considering that the will of man was flexible to either part, [*i. e.* to good or evil,] he took care by way of prevention to secure the grace given them, by the reverence of a law, and the place wherein they were set¹."

I know not how any thing could have been spoken more apposite to our purpose. For this great author doth here most expressly teach, that God did freely bestow upon the first man in his creation, besides his nature, something greater than it, which also he calls "grace," the virtue or power of the Word or the Son of God, the Divine image; and that upon the account of the lubricity of his will, and because by the mere condition of his nature, (without such grace,) he was not able to persevere in that blessed life, wherein he was placed in paradise, or to arrive to that more blessed life in heaven to which also he was designed; as Athanasius himself tells us, in the words immediately following, which we have before cited in their proper place. A little after he tells us^m, "For man indeed is by nature mortal, as being made of things that were not. But yet by reason of the Divine similitude, which he might have kept by attending to it, he should have repelled that his natural corruption, and remained incorruptibleⁿ." Again, in the same page, "God did not only make us out of nothing, but also freely bestowed on us the power of living the life of God by the help of the Word^o." And a few lines after, speaking still of the pro-

¹ Ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων τὰ πάντα πεποίηκεν [ὁ Θεός] διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου Λόγου τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἐν οἷς πρὸ πάντων τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς τὸ ἀνθρώπων γένος ἐλεήσας, καὶ θεωρήσας ὡς οὐκ ἰκανὸν εἶη κατὰ τὴν τῆς ἰδίας γενέσεως λόγον διαμένειν αἰεὶ, πλέον τι χαρίζομενος αὐτοῖς, οὐχ' ἀπλῶς, ὥσπερ πάντα τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς ἄλογα ζῶα, ἔκτισε τοὺς ἀνθρώπους· ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ εἰκόνα ἐποίησεν αὐτοὺς, μεταδοὺς αὐτοῖς καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἰδίου Λόγου δυνάμεως· ἵνα ὥσπερ σκιάς τινος ἔχοντες τοῦ Λόγου καὶ γενόμενοι λογικοὶ, διαμένειν ἐν μακαριότητι δυνήθωσι, ζῶντες τὸν ἀληθινὸν καὶ ὄντως τῶν ἁγίων ἐν παραδείσῳ βίον· εἰδὼς

δὲ πάλιν τὴν ἀνθρώπων εἰς ἀμφοτέρα νεύειν δυνάμενι προαίρεσιν, προλαβὼν ἡσφαλίσατο νόμῳ καὶ τόπῳ τὴν δοθεῖσαν αὐτοῖς χάριν.

^m P. 51. [p. 51. c. 4.]

ⁿ Ἔστι μὲν γὰρ κατὰ φύσιν ἀνθρώπος θνητὸς, ἅτε δὴ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων γεγινώς· διὰ δὲ τὴν πρὸς τὸν ὄντα ὁμοιότητα, ἣν εἰ ἐφύλαττε διὰ τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν κατανοήσεως, ἡμβλυνεν ἐν τῇ κατὰ φύσιν φθορᾷ, καὶ ἔμεινεν ἀφθαρτος.

^o Ὁ μὲν γὰρ Θεὸς οὐ μόνον ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἡμῶς πεποίηκεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ κατὰ Θεὸν ζῆν ἡμῶν ἐχαρίσατο τῇ τοῦ Λόγου χάριτι.

toplasts, he tells us, "Although they were by their nature, as we said before, corruptible, yet by the help of the Word, of which they were made partakers, they should have avoided that which was natural to them, if they had remained obedient. For by reason of the Word which was present with them, that natural corruption should have had no access unto them^p."

In all which places, Athanasius manifestly acknowledgeth a divine principle in our first parents, which he termeth the "grace," the "help," the "participation" of the Word or Son of God, (that is, the Holy Ghost,) by which they were enabled both to live the divine life as to their souls, and also to persevere incorruptible and immortal in their bodies; that is, so as that the corruption, to which their bodies were naturally subject, should have been repelled and staved off from them, by virtue of the divine principle, as long as God should think fit to continue them in the animal body; and that in God's due time their bodies should be changed, and become naturally and internally immortal, by the power of the same principle. I would desire the reader to consult the entire discourse of Athanasius in the pages cited.

The great Basil, in his Homily entitled, *Quod Deus non est Author Peccati*, speaking of the nature of man, as it was at first created, hath these words; "What was the chief or principal good it enjoyed? to wit, THE ASSESSION OF GOD AND ITS CONJUNCTION WITH HIM BY LOVE; from which, when it fell, it became depraved with various and manifold evils^q." So in his book, *De Spiritu Sancto*^r, he plainly tells us, "The dispensation of God and our Saviour towards man, is but the recalling of him from the fall, and his return into the friendship of God, from that alienation which sin had caused. This was the end of Christ's coming in the flesh, of His life and conversation described in the Gospel, of His passion, cross, burial, and resurrection; that man, who is saved by the imitation of Christ, might regain that ANCIENT ADOPTION^s." Where he plainly

^p Ὅντες μὲν κατὰ φύσιν, ὡς προεῖπον, φθαρτοί, χάριτι δὲ τῆς τοῦ Λόγου μετουσίᾳ τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν ἐκφυγόντες, εἰ μετενέκεισαν καλοί: διὰ γὰρ τὸν συνόντα τοῦτοῖς Λόγον, καὶ ἡ κατὰ φύσιν φθορὰ τούτων οὐκ ἤγγιξε.

^q Τί δὲ ἦν αὐτῇ τὸ προηγούμενον ἀγα-

θόν; ἡ προσεδρεῖα τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἡ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης συνάφεια: ἥς ἐκπεσοῦσα, τοῖς ποικίλοις καὶ πολυτρόποις ἀβυστήμασιν ἐκακώθη. [§. 6. vol. ii. p. 78.]

^r Cap. 15.

^s Ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν περὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον οἰκονομία, ἀνάκλησις ἐστίν

supposeth, that man before his fall, had the adoption of a son, and consequently the Spirit of adoption. And so he expressly interprets himself afterwards in the same chapter; "By the Holy Spirit we are restored into paradise, we regain the kingdom of heaven, we return to the adoption of sons^t." Again^u, we have these express words; "We are called in the sanctification of the Spirit, as the Apostle teacheth. This (Spirit) renews us, and makes us again the image of God, and by the laver of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, we are adopted to the Lord, and the new creature again partakes of the Spirit, of which being deprived, it had waxed old. And thus man becomes again the image of God, who had fallen from the Divine similitude, and was become 'like the beasts that perish^x.'"

St. Cyril^y delivers the same doctrine with great perspicuity and elegance, in these words; "For when the animal (viz. man) had turned aside unto wickedness, and out of too much love of the flesh, had superinduced on himself the disease of sin, THAT SPIRIT, WHICH FORMED HIM AFTER THE DIVINE IMAGE, AND AS A SEAL WAS SECRETLY IMPRESSED ON HIS SOUL, WAS SEPARATED FROM HIM, and so he became corruptible and deformed, and every way vicious. But after that the Creator of the universe had designed to restore to its pristine firmness and beauty that which was fallen into corruption, and was become adulterated and deformed by sin superinduced, He sent again into it that Divine and Holy Spirit, which was withdrawn from it, and which hath a natural aptitude and power to change us into the celestial image, viz. by transforming us into His own likeness^z."

ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκπτώσεως, καὶ ἐπάνοδος εἰς οἰκείωσιν Θεοῦ, ἀπὸ τῆς διὰ τὴν πορακοὴν γενομένης ἀλλυτριώσεως· διὰ τοῦτο, ἡ μετὰ σαρκὸς ἐπιδημία Χριστοῦ· ἡ τῶν εὐαγγελικῶν πολιτευμάτων ὑποτύπωσις· τὰ πάθη· ὁ σταυρὸς· ἡ ταφή· ἡ ἀνάστασις, ὥστε τὸν σωζόμενον ἄνθρωπον διὰ μιμήσεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἀρχαίαν ἐκείνην νόθεσίαν ἀπολαβεῖν. [vol. iii. p. 28.]

^t Διὰ Πνεύματος ἁγίου, ἡ εἰς παράδεισον ἀποκατάστασις· ἡ εἰς βασιλείαν οὐρανῶν ἀνοδος· ἡ εἰς νόθεσίαν ἐπάνοδος. Vide ejusdem libri, cap. 9.

^u Homil. Advers. Eunomium, v. p. 117.

^x Ἐν ἁγιασμῷ τοῦ Πνεύματος ἐκλήθη-

μεν, ὡς ὁ ἀπόστολος διδάσκει, τοῦτο ἡμῖς ἀνακαίωσι, καὶ πάλιν εἰκόνας ἀναδείκνυσιν Θεοῦ, διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως Πνεύματος ἁγίου νόθετούμεθα Κυρίῳ· καινὴ πάλιν κτίσις μεταλαμβάνουσα τοῦ Πνεύματος, οὐπερ ἐστερημένη ἐκπεσὼν τῆς ὁμοιότητος τῆς θείας, καὶ παρασυμβληθεὶς κτήνεσιν ἀνόητοις καὶ μοιωθεὶς αὐτοῖς. [vol. iii. p. 303.]

^y 7. Dialog. de Trinit. p. 653.

^z Διαγενευκότος γὰρ τοῦ ζῶον πρὸς τὸ πλημμελές, καὶ τὴν εἰσποίητον ἁμαρτίαν ἐκ τῆς εἰσάπαν φιλοσαρκίας ἡρῶσθη-κότος, τὸ πρὸς θείαν εἰκόνα διαμορφοῦν αὐτὸ, καὶ σημάντρου δίκην ἀπορρήτως

And in the fourth book of the same work, "When the only-begotten Son was made man, finding man's nature bereft of its ancient and primitive good, He hastened to transform it again into the same state, out of the fountain of His fulness, sending forth (the Spirit,) and saying, 'Receive the Holy Ghost^a.'"

St. Ambrose^b interprets the image of God, after which the first man is said to be created, of the ornaments of grace and supernatural virtue, wherewith his soul was beautified, and then adds these words; "After this image was Adam made before his sin; but when he fell, he laid aside the image of the heavenly, and assumed the image of the earthly one^c." So in his commentary upon Luke^d, expounding the parable^e of the man that fell among the thieves, he tells us, "that the angels of darkness, when man fell into their hands, stripped him of the garments of saving grace^f."

St. Hierom, upon the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians^g, expounding these words of St. Paul, ("Grieve not the Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption,") hath this note, "We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of God, that both our spirit and soul might have the impress of God's seal, and we might again receive that image and similitude, after which in the beginning we were created. This seal of the Holy Spirit is, according to the speech of our Saviour, put on by the impression of God^h."

St. Austinⁱ thus speaks of our first parents, "As soon as they

ἐντεθειμένοι ἀπενοσφίζετο Πνεῦμα, φθαρ-
τὸν τε οὕτω, καὶ ἀκαλλές, καὶ τί γὰρ οὐχὶ
τῶν ἐκτόπων συνειληφὸς ἀναπέφονται;
ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ τῶν ὅλων γενεσιουργὸς ἀνακο-
μίζειν ἤθελεν εἰς ἐδραίοτητα τε καὶ εὐκο-
σμίαν τὴν ἐν ἀρχαῖς τὸ διολυσθῆσαν εἰς
φθορὰν, παράσημόν τε, καὶ ἀκαλλές διὰ
τὴν εἰσποίητον γεγονὸς ἁμαρτίαν, ἐνῆκεν
αὐτοῖς αὐτῷ τὸ ἀποφοιτῆσάν ποτε θεῖόν τε,
καὶ ἄγιον Πνεῦμα, μεταστοιχειοῦν εἰς
μάλα πρὸς τὴν ὑπερκόσμιον εἰκόνα, καὶ
πεφυκὸς καὶ δυνάμενον διὰ τοῦ πρὸς ἰδίαν
ἡμᾶς μεταρρυθμίζειν ἐμφέρειαν.

^a Ὅτε γέγονεν ἄνθρωπος ὁ μονογενὴς,
ἐρήμην τοῦ πάλαι καὶ ἐν ἀρχαῖς ἀγαθὴν
τὴν ἀνθρώπου φύσιν εὐρὼν, πάλιν αὐτὴν
εἰς ἐκεῖνο μεταστοιχειοῦν ἡπείγετο, κα-
θ' ἃπερ ὑπὸ πηγῆς τοῦ ἰδίου πληρώματος
ἐνιείς τε καὶ λέγων· Λάβετε Πνεῦμα
ἅγιον.

^b Lib. vi. Hexamer. c. 7. [vol i. p. 129.]

^c Secundum hanc imaginem Adam
ante peccatum; sed ubi lapsus est,
deposuit imaginem cœlestis, et sumpsit
terrestris effigiem.

^d [Vol. i. p. 1427.]

^e Chap. x.

^f [Qui sunt isti latrones, nisi angeli
noctis atque tenebrarum? Hi ante
dispoliant quæ accepimus indumenta
gratiæ spiritualis.]

^g [Vol. vii. p. 631.]

^h Signati autem sumus Spiritu Dei
sancto, ut et spiritus noster et anima
imprimantur signaculo Dei, et illam
recipiamus imaginem et similitudinem,
ad quam in exordio conditi sumus. Hoc
signaculum sancti Spiritus, juxta elo-
quium salvatoris, Deo imprimente sig-
natur.

ⁱ Lib. xi. de Genes. ad Liter. c. 31.

[vol. iii. p. 290.]

had transgressed the commandment, being wholly stripped within of the grace of God forsaking them, they looked upon themselves^k," &c. So^l speaking again of Adam, he saith, "Nor would God have him to be without His grace, which He left in the hand of his freewill^m." Againⁿ, he speaks to the same purpose; "What doth the discovery of the nakedness, after the tasting of the forbidden fruit, signify but this, that what before was covered by grace, was now made bare by sin? For there must needs be a mighty grace, where the earthly and animal body felt no bestial lust. He therefore, that being clothed with grace, had nothing in his naked body to be ashamed of, being despoiled of grace, was sensible of something that needed a covering^o."

Prosper, the scholar of St. Austin^p, delivers the same Catholic doctrine in these words; "For in that ruin of the universal prevarication, man's nature was not bereft either of its substance or faculty of willing, but only of the light and beauty of those virtues, of which by the imposture of the envious (spirit) it was stripped or divested. Now having lost those things, by which alone it was able to attain an eternal and never-failing incorruption of soul and body, what hath it remaining beside the things belonging to this temporal life, which is wholly a life of condemnation and punishment? For which cause there is a necessity, that those who are born in Adam should be born again in Christ, lest any man should be found in the generation which perished. For if the posterity of Adam dwelt naturally in those virtues, in which Adam was before his sin, they would not be the children of wrath, they would not be darkness, or under the power of darkness; lastly, they would

^k Mox ut præceptum transgressi sunt, intrinsecus gratia deserente omnino nudati, in sua membra oculos injecerunt.

^l De Corrept. et Grat. c. 11. [vol. x. p. 767. §. 31.]

^m Nec ipsum Deus esse voluit sine sua gratia, quam reliquit in ejus libero arbitrio.

ⁿ Lib. iv. cont. Julian. c. ult. [vol. x. p. 625. §. 82.]

^o Quid est, gnstato cibo prohibito, nuditas indicata, nisi peccato nudatum, quod gratia contegebat? Gratia quippe Dei magna ibi erat, ubi terrenum et

animale corpus bestialem libininem non habebat. Qui ergo vestitus gratia non habebat in nudo corpore quod puderet, spoliatus gratia sensit, quod operire deberet. Read the same St. Austin, De Civitat. Dei, xiii. 1, 13, 24. et xiv. 10, 11, 17. et lib. de Spiritu et Lit. c. 17. See also what Philo speaks to the same effect, Γυμνότητα οὐ τὴν τοῦ σώματος παραλαμβάνει, ἀλλὰ καθ' ἣν ὁ νοῦς ἑμοίρος καὶ γυμνὸς ἀρετῆς ἀνευρίσκεται. Philo Allegor. ii. p. 71. [l. iii. p. 98.]

^p Contra Collatorem, c. 19. [c. 9. p. 320. ed. 1711.]

not need the grace of a Saviour, because they would not be good in vain, nor defrauded of the reward of righteousness, having those good things, by the loss whereof our first parents deserved to be banished out of paradise. But now seeing no man can escape eternal death, without the sacrament of regeneration, doth it not most plainly appear from the singularity of the remedy itself, into what a depth of evils the nature of all mankind is plunged, by the prevarication of him in whom all men sinned, and lost whatsoever he lost? Now he in the beginning lost faith, he lost continence, he lost charity, he was despoiled of wisdom and understanding, he was bereft of counsel and fortitude^a, &c.

Lastly, Fulgentius^r, asserts it as a thing to be held undoubted among all Catholics, "That the supreme and true God did to the first man, whom out of His free goodness He made good according to His own image, implanting in him a faculty of knowing and loving Him, not only give the gift of a good-will, but also create in him a free will, entire and sound, for the having and keeping of that righteousness which was bestowed on him; so that if the faculty and notion of his free will, did not forsake the grace of God assisting it, the goodness of God might bestow on man the reward of eternal life: but if, despising the Divine righteousness, it fell from grace, the justice of God might punish the offender^s." Where he plainly acknowledgeth in the first

^a Naturæ enim humanæ, in illa universalis prævaricationis ruina, nec substantia erepta est nec voluntas, sed LUMEN DECUSQUE VIRTUTUM, quibus fraude invidentis exuta est. Perditis autem per quæ ad æternam atque inamissibilem corporis animæque incorruptionem poterat pervenire, quid ei remansit, nisi quod ad temporalem pertinet vitam, quæ tota est damnationis et pænæ? Propter quod, natos in Adamo renasci oportet in Christo, ne in illa quis inveniat generatione, quæ perit. Nam si posterius Adæ in illis virtutibus naturaliter agerent, in quibus Adam fuit ante peccatum, non essent natura filii iræ, non essent tenebræ, nec sub potestate tenebrarum: Salvatoris denique gratia non egerent: quia non frustra boni essent, nec justitiæ præmio fraudarentur: habentes ea bona, quorum amissione primi parentes de paradiso exulare meruerunt. Nunc autem, cum sine sacramento re-

generationis æternam mortem nemo possit evadere; nonne ex ipsius remedii singularitate apertissime patet, in quam profundum malum totius humani generis natura demersa sit, illius prævaricatione, in quo omnes peccaverunt, et quicquid ille perdidit, perdiderunt? Perdidit autem primitus fidem, perdidit continentiam, perdidit charitatem, spoliatus est sapientia et intellectu, caruit consilio et fortitudine, &c.

^r De Incarnatione et Gratia Christi, ad Petrum Diaconum, c. xii. [p. 299. ed. 1684.]

^s Summum et verum Deum, primo homini, quem ad suam imaginem gratuita bonitate bonum fecit, cui facultatem quoque suæ cognitionis ac dilectionis inseruit, non solum bonæ voluntatis donum, quin etiam ad habendam custodiendamque justitiam, integrum sanumque creasse libertatis arbitrium, ut facultas atque motus inditæ libertatis si

man, before his fall, not only a natural faculty of free will, created entire and sound, but also a grace of God assisting it, and a divine righteousness to be kept and preserved by it. So a little after he hath these express words; "Therefore the first man, being created out of the earth, earthly, received indeed the grace whereby he could not sin, if he would not sin, but he had not yet so great a grace, as whereby he neither would at all nor could sin ^t." It were easy to go on in the proof of this doctrine, out of the succeeding writers approved in the Church, and out of the schoolmen themselves; but it is already well known and confessed, that they were all generally of this opinion.

Now before I proceed to take off the objections against this doctrine, and to shew the great use of it, it will be necessary to reflect a little upon the testimonies alleged, and to take notice of a difficulty in them, which if not satisfied may greatly weaken, if not wholly blast, their credit and authority. It is easily observed, that almost all the Fathers, whose testimonies we have produced, do place the image and similitude of God, after which the first man is said to be created ^u, especially in those supernatural powers, gifts, or graces, wherewith they suppose him to be furnished in his creation. At this (I doubt not) the Socinian will laugh in his sleeve, and from this one discovery will be apt presently to conclude for certain, that this notion of the Fathers, asserting a supernatural righteousness in the first man, was a mere dream, an idle fancy of theirs, as being founded on a manifest falsehood. For, saith he, what can be more apparent, than that the image and likeness of God, after which the first man is said to be created ^x, is placed only in his dominion over the other creatures in this visible world? For after God had said, "Let us make man after our own image and likeness," he immediately adds, "and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, &c." Where seeing the latter words are exegetical of the former, it follows, that by the image of God is meant man's dominion over the brutes. And

juvantem se gratiam Dei non desereret, præmium vitæ æternæ tribueret Dei bonitas homini: si autem justitiam divinam contemnens, a gratia excidisset, supplicia retribuere justitia peccatori.

^t Creatus ergo prius homo de terra terrenus accepit quidem gratiam, qua

non posset peccare, si peccare nollet, nondum tamen tantam acceperat gratiam, qua nec peccare vellet omnino nec posset, &c.

^u Gen. i. 27.

^x Gen. i. 27.

in this argument the Socinians boast as if it were a perfect demonstration. But I have learnt long since to despise the confidence of this kind of men, as having by many experiments found, that their greatest strength, where they oppose the sense of the Catholic Church, is perfect weakness. Sure I am, that this great argument of theirs is a mere inconsequence.

For, 1. There is no necessity arising from the text itself, that we should grant the latter words to be exegetical of the former; for they may be understood only as consequent to the former, that is, so as to express, not the nature of the Divine image, but what followed thereupon in the first man.

But, 2. Let us grant that there is an ἐξήγησις in the words, and that the dominion mentioned in the latter part of the text, is an exposition of the Divine image mentioned in the former words; what then? doth it thence follow that the dominion constitutes the whole and entire image of God, after which the first man is said to be created? Surely no. It is sufficient, that it be acknowledged as a part of the Divine image. For we find often in Scripture, that what is in one place in part only described, is elsewhere fully explained in all its parts: whereof the one being described in one text, the rest are not to be denied which are elsewhere explained. *Ab inclusiva ad exclusivam non valet consequentia.* Although therefore we willingly grant, that man's dominion over the other creatures belongs to that image of God after which he is said to be created, yet it doth not thence follow, that this dominion makes up the full complete and adequate definition of that Divine image.

3. We have already observed, that Moses, in the history of the creation, designed to lead the rude and carnal people of the Jews from things sensible and obvious, to the invisible things of God. Hence in the instance now before us, having related the words of God, "Let us make man after our own image, &c." he presently adds, "and let him have dominion, &c." not to signify that this was the chiefest part, much less the whole of the Divine image in man, but because in this dominion, as an effect obvious to sense, it more plainly appeared, that man was made after the image of God. Let us look to the words presently following^y, concerning the Divine benediction upon our

first parents; in the beginning of the verse it is said, "And God blessed them;" and immediately it is added, "and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, &c." Let now some novice out of the Racovian school step forth and tell us, that the latter words are exegetical of the former; and, consequently, that the Divine benediction, mentioned in the beginning of the verse, extended no farther than the effects immediately expressed in the following words; that is, that our first parents were blessed by God to no other purposes than that of begetting children, and exercising dominion over the brute creatures; and so that they were not at all designed or consecrated to those higher ends of increasing and being fruitful in virtue, of subduing and keeping their lower and brutish faculties in a due order and obedience to the *τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν*, of glorifying the God that made them, and of attaining a farther happiness by obedience to His precepts: who would not presently discern the perfect brutishness of this kind of reasoning? and yet this is every whit as wise a discourse as that of Socinus, concerning the Divine image now under our examination.

4. The image of God is a comprehensive thing, and there are many lines requisite to complete the Divine similitude, after which the first man was created. To this belongs man's intellectual power, his liberty of will, his dominion over the other creatures flowing from the two former. These make up the *τὸ οὐσιώδες*, that part of that Divine image which is natural and essential to man, and consequently can never be wholly blotted out, defaced, or extinguished, but still remains even in man fallen. But beside these, the Church of God hath ever acknowledged, in the first man, certain additional ornaments, and, as it were, complements of the Divine image, such as immortality, grace, holiness, righteousness, whereby man approached more nearly to the similitude and likeness of God. These were (if I may so speak) the lively colours wherein the grace, the beauty, and lustre of the Divine image principally consisted; these colours faded, yea, were defaced and blotted out by man's transgression.

St. Gregory Nyssen^z sets forth this by a most apt and ele-

^z Lib. de Hom. Opificio, c. 4. [vol. i. p. 53.]

giant similitude, comparing the animated and living effigies of that great King with the image of the Emperor, which is so expressed by the hand of the artificer, either in sculpture or picture, as to represent the very dress and ensigns of the royal majesty, such as the purple robe, the sceptre, and the diadem. For as the Emperor's image doth represent, not only his countenance and the figure of his body, and as it were his substance, but also his dress and ornaments, and royal ensigns; so man doth then perfectly represent in himself the image and similitude of God, when to the good things of nature, which cannot be blotted out or extinguished, the ornaments of grace and virtue also are added: when man's nature is (as he saith) "not clothed with purple, or vaunting its dignity by a sceptre or a diadem; (for the archetype consists not in such things as these;) but instead of purple is clothed with virtue, which is of all other the most royal vestment; and, for a sceptre, is supported by a blessed immortality; and instead of a diadem, is adorned with a crown of righteousness^a."

Now that these supernatural ornaments and perfections were a part, and a chief part of the image of God, after which the first man is said to be created, is not an idle dream or fancy of the Christian writers, but was a notion received and acknowledged in the Jewish Church many years before our Saviour's appearance in the flesh. This is very manifest from the almost divine author of the Book of Wisdom, which was always entertained in the Christian Church with a reverence next to that which they paid to the divinely-inspired writings. For he tells us^b, that "God created man for immortality, (*ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ*, for an incorruptible estate,) and made him the image of His own propriety^c." Where he manifestly placeth the image of God, after which Adam was created, (that is, the chiefest excellency and perfection thereof,) in this, that he was made and designed for an immortal and incorruptible estate,

^a Οὐ πορφυρίδα περικειμένη, οὐδὲ σκήπτρῳ καὶ διαδήματι τὴν ἀξίαν ἐπισημαίνουσα· οὐδὲ γὰρ τὸ ἀρχέτυπον ἐν τούτοις ἐστίν· ἀλλ' ἀντὶ μὲν τῆς ἀλουργίδος τὴν ἀρετὴν ἠμφιεσμένη, ὃ δὲ πάντων βασιλικώτατον ἐσθμμάτων ἐστίν. ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ σκήπτρου, τῇ μακαριότητι τῆς ἀθανασίας

ἐρειδομένη, ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ βασιλικοῦ διαδήματος, τῷ τῆς δικαιοσύνης στεφάνῳ κεκοσμημένη.

^b Chap. ii. 23.

^c [In our version we read "eternity." Grabe's edition gives the two readings ἀἰδιότητος and ἰδιότητος.]

and consequently fitted with powers and faculties proportioned to such an end. This blessed immortality was the *ἰδίᾳ ιδιότης*, “the proper propriety,” (which by a barbarous elegance signifies “the most especial propriety”) of the Divine nature, by the participation whereof man made the nearest approach to the Divine image and similitude. Let the dull and heavy Divines of Racovia yet think so *πτωχῶς καὶ ταπεινῶς*, “poorly and meanly,” concerning the Divine image, after which the first man was created, as to confine it to that little lordship (*egregiam vero laudem!*) which man enjoyed over the brute creatures; let them, I say, consider the words of this ancient author, (living in those darker times, before the clearer revelation of Divine truth by our blessed Saviour,) and from him learn to correct this their gross and even palpable error.

The same is evident out of Philo the Jew, who bordered upon the very age of our Saviour's incarnation. In him you shall frequently meet with this more sublime notion of the Divine image and similitude. So^d having told us, that they only, who are acquainted with the writings of the divinely-inspired Moses, can give a true account how man attains to the knowledge of the invisible God, he presently after expresseth the sense of ‘the Mosaic narration in these words; “He speaks to this purpose. The Creator made not any soul (enclosed) in a body apt of itself to see or know its Maker. But yet considering how hugely advantageous such knowledge would be unto the creature if it had it, (for this is the utmost bound of happiness and felicity,) He inspired into it from above something of His own Divinity; which, being invisible, impressed upon the invisible soul its own characters, that so even this earthly region might not be without a creature made after the image of God^e.” Where he manifestly placeth the image of God, (*i. e.* the perfection thereof,) after which Adam was created, in those divine characters which were impressed on his soul in his

^d Lib. Quod Det. Potiori insid. solcat, p. 171.

^e Ἐλεγε δὲ ὧδε, ψυχὴν οὐδεμίαν τῷ σώματι ὃ ποιῶν εἰργάζετο ἰκάνην ἐξ ἑαυτῆς τὸν ποιητὴν ἰδεῖν· λογισάμενος δὲ μεγάλα ἀνῆσειν τὸ δημιουργήμα, εἰ λάβοι τοῦ δημιουργήσαντος ἔννοιαν· εὐ-

δαμονίας γὰρ καὶ μακαριότητος ὅρος οὗτος· ἄνωθεν ἐνέπνει τῆς ἰδίου θειότητος· ἢ δ' ἀοράτως ἀοράτῳ ψυχῇ τοὺς ἑαυτῆς τύπους ἐνεσφραγίζετο, ἵνα μὴδ' ὁ περίγειος χῶρος εἰκόνας ἀμοιρήσῃ Θεοῦ. [vol. i. p. 208.]

creation, or in the supernatural gift and faculty whereby he was enabled to attain the vision and perfect knowledge of God; and he also asserts, that this was the recondite sense of Moses's words in the history of man's creation. The same notion of the Divine image he elsewhere^f delivers more clearly and expressly in these words; "The great Moses makes not the species of the rational soul to be like to any of the creatures, but pronounceth it to be the image of the invisible God; as judging (the soul) then to become the true and genuine coin of God, when it is formed and impressed by the Divine seal, the character whereof is the eternal Word. For God, saith he, breathed into his face the breath of life. So that he that receives the inspiration, must of necessity represent the image of Him that gives it. Therefore it is said, that man was made after the image of God^g." And he presently after tells us, that by the same Divine Spirit, which fashioned man after the image of God, man's soul was exalted and lifted up "to the highest altitude^h."

Now it being thus apparent, that this sublimer notion of the Divine image, after which the first man is said to be created, was so anciently received and acknowledged in the Jewish Church, and also so universally entertained in the Churches of Christ planted by the Apostles, it would seem very strange to me, if any rational man should doubt of the sense of St. Paul's words, (were they not of themselves plain enough,) which we read Col. iii. 9, 10; "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge AFTER THE IMAGE of Him that created him." With which place you may compare that of the same Apostleⁱ. Surely Mr. Calvin's collection is here most genuine, who from

^f Lib. de Plantatione Noe, p. 216, 217.

^g Ὁ δὲ μέγας Μωϋσῆς οὐδενὶ τῶν γεγονότων τῆς λογικῆς ψυχῆς τὸ εἶδος ὁμοίωσεν, ἀλλ' εἶπεν αὐτὴν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἀοράτου εἰκόνα, δόκιμον εἶναι νομίσας, οὐσιωθεῖσαν καὶ τυπωθεῖσαν οφραγίδι Θεοῦ, ἧς ὁ χαρακτήρ ἐστιν αἰδίου Λόγος. Ἐνέπνευσε γὰρ, φησιν, ὁ Θεὸς εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνοὴν ζωῆς· ὥστε ἀνάγκη πρὸς τὸν ἐκπέμποντα τὸν δεχόμενον ἀπεικονίσθαι· διὸ καὶ λέγεται κατ' εἰκόνα Θεοῦ τὸν ἄνθρωπον γεγενῆσθαι. [vol. i. p. 332.]

^h Πρὸς μᾶκιστον ὕψος. To the same

purpose speaketh Philo, "Ὅταν ἀκούσῃς Ἀδὰμ, γήινον καὶ φθαρτὸν εἶναι νόμιξε· ὁ γὰρ κατ' εἰκόνα, οὐ γήινος, ἀλλ' οὐράνιος, Phil. Allegor. l. i. p. 57. Διττὸν γένος ἀνθρώπων, τὸ μὲν θείῳ Πνεύματι καὶ λογισμῷ βιούντων· τὸ δὲ αἵματι καὶ σαρκὸς ἡδονῇ ζώντων· τοῦτο τὸ εἶδος πλάσμα ἐστὶ γῆς, ἐκεῖνο δὲ θείας εἰκδῖος ἐμφερεῖς ἐκμαγεῖον· χρεῖος δὲ ἐστὶν οὐ μετρίως ὁ πεπλασμένος ἡμῶν χοῦς καὶ ἀναδευμένος αἵματι βοηθείας τῆς ἐκ Θεοῦ. Idem lib. Quis Rerum Divin. Hæres. p. 489. [vol. i. p. 481.]

ⁱ Eph. iv. 24.

the text alleged draws this inference: "Hence we learn both what is the end of our regeneration, to wit, that we be made like unto God, and that His glory may shine brightly in us; and also what is that image of God, of which mention is made in the history of Moses; namely, the rectitude and integrity of the whole soul, whereby man, as it were in a glass, represents the wisdom, righteousness, and goodness of God^k." Indeed (laying aside that reverence which we owe to so consentient a judgment of the Church of God, both before and after Christ) there is light enough in the text itself (as we have already intimated) to direct us to this interpretation. For St. Paul affirms the Ephesians *ἀνακαινοῦσθαι*, "to be renewed," after this image of the Creator. Now to be "renewed," most properly signifies "to receive again something which we once had, but lost." So the active verb *ἀνακαίνιζεν* is manifestly used, Heb. vi. 6. And so also the Hebrew word שׁוּב very often signifies, "to restore a thing unto its former estate," as Psal. ciii. 5; Lam. v. 21. Man therefore once before had (viz. in the state of integrity) that image of God, to which he is formed and fashioned again by the grace of Christ the Redeemer. So the apostolical writer, Irenæus^l, paraphraseth on the place; "In that he saith, 'who is renewed in knowledge,' he shews, that the very man, who before was ignorant of God, is by the knowledge of Him renewed. For the knowledge of God renews a man. And in that he saith, 'according to the image of the Creator,' he expresseth the restoration of that man, who was in the beginning made after the image of God^m." And what the same Irenæus elsewhere tells usⁿ, is apparently the sense of the Catholic Church, viz. "That what we lost in Adam, to wit, the Divine image and similitude, that we receive again in Christ Jesus^o."

^k Hinc discimus, tum quis sit finis regenerationis nostræ, hoc est, ut Deo reddamur similes, ac in nobis reluceat ejus gloria: tum quæ sit Dei imago, ejus mentio fit apud Moysen, nempe totius animæ rectitudo et integritas, ita ut homo sapientiam Dei, justitiam, et bonitatem quasi speculum repræsentet. Calvin in Col. iii. 10.

^l v. 12.

^m In eo quod ait, *qui renovatur in agnitionem*, demonstrabat quoniam ipse ille qui ignorantie erat ante homo, id

est, ignorans Deum per eam quæ in eum est agnitionem renovatur. Agnitio enim Dei renovat hominem. Et in eo quod dicit, *secundum imaginem Conditoris*, recapitulationem manifestavit ejus hominis, qui in initio secundum imaginem factus est Dei.

ⁿ iii. 20. [c. 18. p. 209.]

^o Ut quod perdideramus in Adam, id est, secundum imaginem et similitudinem esse Dei, hoc in Christo Jesu recipereamus.

I am sensible that my zeal of vindicating the Catholic doctrine hath carried me a little beyond my design. To return again to the matter proposed, it is abundantly manifest from the many testimonies alleged, that the ancient Doctors of the Church did with a general consent acknowledge, that our first parents in the state of integrity had in them something more than nature, that is, were endowed with the divine principle of the Spirit, in order to a supernatural felicity. Yet the most learned Grotius will by no means grant this hypothesis. He acknowledgeth indeed, *innocentiam quandam fuisse in Adamo priusquam peccavit*, (and we owe him no thanks for that concession; for Socinus will confess as much; and Grotius himself tells us^p, that he is not well in his wits that shall deny it,) but that Adam in the state of integrity was spiritual, or had any thing of the Holy Spirit in him, he will by no means admit of. A man might well expect, that so learned a man as Grotius was, and otherwise so great a reverencer of antiquity, should not without most evident reasons maintain an opinion so manifestly thwarting the stream and current of the Catholic Doctors. But alas! he hath but one argument to defend his hypothesis, and that argument too, when examined, will appear to be a very weak one, yea, a very gross fallacy. The argument is this, "St. Paul, when^q he opposeth the earthly Adam to the spiritual Adam; considers Adam as he was at first created, and not as fallen, &c. whence it follows, that we have another kind of nature from Christ, than we should have had, if Adam had remained in his first estate, and begotten children like himself^r."

With the same weapon an author, very ancient, but disallowed and censured by the learned as one that prepared the way for the Pelagian heresy, oppugned of old this Catholic doctrine; I mean the author of The Book of Questions out of the Old and New Testament, which by a gross mistake usurps a place among the works of St. Augustin. The 123rd Question, which he propounds, is this, "Whether Adam had the Holy Spirit?" And in the entrance to his resolution of this question he tells us, "that this was indeed affirmed by the generality of

^p Vide Grot. Not. in Cassand. ad Art. 2. et Vot. pro Pace ad eundem artic. et discus. p. 30.

^q 1 Cor. xv. 45.

^r Vot. pro Pace ad Art. 2.

Christians in his time upon this ground, that we receive in the second Adam what we lost in the first." But he declares his own opinion to the contrary, and proves it from the forementioned text^s. From whence he thus argues; "What is more manifest, than that Adam had not the Holy Spirit? for he was made a living soul, and it is by Christ that man is made a quickening spirit^t." But it is apparent, that the text alleged hath quite another sense^u than what is supposed in this objection. For the Apostle in that chapter, discoursing of the resurrection of the body, shews, in the verses referred to, the difference betwixt the body of man, considered not only in the state wherein it was after the fall, but as it was at first created, and the glorious body which Christ received in His resurrection, and we expect in ours. The difference is this; that the first Adam (as likewise all that descend from him) needed meat and drink, and other external helps, for the conservation of his body: but Christ, the second Adam, after His resurrection, received a body in its own nature, and by an internal principle immortal; and the like body is promised to all those that believe in Christ at the last and general resurrection. And what is all this to the purpose of the objectors? Surely there is no repugnancy at all betwixt those two propositions, that Adam before his fall had an animal body in the sense explained, and that Adam in the same state and condition had a spiritual soul, or a soul elevated and raised by the Divine Spirit. For both these meet together in every true Christian, only with this difference, that our bodies now are not only in a possibility, but under a necessity of dying, the sentence of death being passed on every man; but the body of the first man, although it was in its own principles mortal and subject to death and corruption, yet it should never have died, if man had not sinned, but should have been preserved by the special grace and favour of God to an incorruptible estate. Nay, this argument of the objectors may be retorted upon themselves thus; It is evident from the Scriptures, and the perpetual tradition of the Church, (and Grotius himself confesseth as much,) that the first man, whose

^s 1 Cor. xv. 45, &c.

^t Quid tam ajertum, quam quod Adam non habuit Spiritum S. ? factus est enim in animam viventem, 1^o cr Chris-

tum autem in spiritum vivificantem.

^u See St. Austin excellently explaining the text, *De Civitat. Dei*, xiii. 23.

body was of itself and in its own nature earthly, and so mortal, should yet by the grace of God, and by a certain Divine power, (of which the tree of life was a Sacrament,) having persevered in a blessed immortality, and never have died if he had not sinned. Therefore the protoplast had a gift of grace and supernatural power granted him as to his body, whereby that should have been elevated and raised above its natural constitution; and why then should we so pertinaciously refuse to acknowledge a like supernatural gift afforded him as to his soul?

And now seeing we have left the judgment of the Church, and are fallen to our own reasonings, I crave leave to take my turn, and to propose an argument or two (as an overplus to those reasons that have been above suggested) in vindication of this doctrine of the Catholic Fathers, taken out of the history of the primitive state of the first man, as it is delivered by Moses himself. And these arguments, if they be not demonstrative, yet sure I am they are far more considerable than any thing that hath been yet produced in defence of the contrary novel opinion.

1. It is apparent from the account of Moses, that the first man in the state of integrity was (as we have heard Tertullian expressing it) *Deo de proximo amicus*, "the intimate friend of God," that he could *cælestia portare*, "bear heavenly things," and sustain the approaches of the shechinah, or majestic presence of God, without any regret or starting back; that he could maintain a conference or discourse with God (as we have heard St. Basil speaking) in the same tongue or language, as we read Gen. ii. 15, 16. 19—23. Now for any man to think that a merely animal creature (such as the learned men we now oppose fancy Adam in his best estate to have been) could be admitted to, or whilst such, fit for, so divine a converse, seems to me a very senseless imagination, and so (I doubt not but) it will appear to any man that shall more closely consider the matter. No creature can bear the Divine Presence, that is not prepared for it by the Divine Spirit. And man's communion, friendship, and converse with God, necessarily imports an union with Him, and the bond of the union is certainly the Divine Spirit^x.

^x See 1 Cor. vi. 17.

2. It is likewise evident from the same history of Moses, that Adam in the state of integrity, had a knowledge of certain things, unaccountable upon any other hypothesis but this, that his mind was irradiated with a divine illumination.

I might here insist upon that admirable philosophy-lecture, which Adam (appointed by God Himself to that office) read on all the other animals. For although his theme here was a part of natural philosophy, yet his performance herein, if we look to its circumstances, cannot but be judged by every considering man to be the effect of a more than human sagacity^y. That in the infinite variety of creatures, never before seen by Adam, he should be able on a sudden, without study or premeditation, to give names to each of them, so adapted and fitted to their natures, as that God Himself should approve the nomenclature, how astonishing a thing is it! What single man, among all the philosophers since the fall, what Plato, what Aristotle, &c. among the ancients, what Descartes or Gassendus, &c. among the moderns, nay, what royal society, durst have undertaken this? Hence Plato himself (*in Cratylō*) acknowledgeth the man that first imposed names on things, to have been the wisest of mortals, nay he affirmeth him to have had something more than human in him. His words are these; “I suppose (O Socrates) the truest account of the problem to be this, that a certain power more than human imposed the first names on things.”

But to let this pass. We read that Adam no sooner saw his wife brought unto him by God, (who was pleased to honour that first and most glorious wedding, solemnized in paradise itself, by performing the office of a matrimonial Father, in giving and presenting the bride with His own hands,) but he presently gave an exact account of her original, viz. That she was taken out of himself, and imposed on her a name accordingly; although whilst the admirable operation was performing in him, he lay in

^y Παγκάλως καὶ τὴν θέσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων ἀνῆψε τῷ πρώτῳ σοφίας γὰρ καὶ βασιλείας τὸ ἔργον· σοφὸς δὲ ἐκεῖνος αὐτομαθὴς καὶ αὐτοδίδακτος χάρισι θεαῖς γενόμενος, &c. Philo de Mundi Opific. p. 34. [vol. i. p. 35.]

^z Οἶμαι μὲν ἐγὼ τὸν ἀληθέστατον λόγον περὶ τούτων εἶναι, ὃ Σόκρατες, μείζονά τινα δύναμιν εἶναι ἢ ἀνθρώπειαν,

τὴν θεμένην τὰ πρῶτα ὀνόματα τοῖς πράγμασι. See also what Procopius speaks to the same effect; Adamus non sine singulari prudentia et solertia, quam a Deo accepit, nomina dat creaturis, quæ ipsarum substantias quasi in speculo representent. Procop. ad c. 2. Genes. p. 57. edit. Tigur.

the profoundest sleep, and so could be no way sensible thereof. For thus we read expressly^a, "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man."

Now whence could Adam have this knowledge^b? He might indeed from the conformity of the parts of that goodly creature presented to his eye, and her nearest likeness to himself, guess that God had now provided him the meet help which before he wanted; but it is scarce imaginable how he could so punctually describe her original, and the manner of her formation, otherwise than by a secret inspiration and internal suggestion of the Divine Spirit. Besides, the words following^c, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh," are manifestly enough the continuation of Adam's discourse, transferring the former hypothesis into a thesis: as if he had said, As God hath joined me with my woman into one flesh, so from henceforth every husband shall obey this order established by heaven, and, leaving his dearest parents, cleave unto his wife as his own flesh. Our Saviour^d, attributes these words to God, because Adam uttered them by a spirit of prophecy. And this interpretation we meet with in the ancient fragments of Polycarp^e, cited by Victor, Bishop of Capua, above one thousand two hundred years ago. The sum is this, "Both Adam uttered this prophecy, and God the Father also is rightly said to have uttered the same, because He inspired him^f." Hence Origen, and others of the Fathers, reckon Adam among the divinely-inspired persons, and expressly term him a prophet.

And the "deep sleep," which Adam was cast into before God

^a Gen. ii. 21—23.

^b Adamus ista omnia prolocutus est divino et prophetico inspiratus Spiritu. Nec enim propriis viribus, ex qua materia et in quem finem mulier condita fuerit, cognoscere quivisset. Procopius ad c. 2. Genes. p. 58.

^c Ver. 24.

^d Matt. xix. 5.

^e Printed by Feuarentius, at the end of his Annotat. on c. 2. l. iii. Iren. p. 241.

^f Et Adam hanc prophetiam protulit, et Pater, qui eum inspiravit, recte dicitur protulisse.

formed Eve out of him, the ancient Christian writers generally understand to have been designed by God, not only as an expedient for the performance of the wonderful operation in him, without sense of pain, but also as an *ἐκστασις*, to prepare him for the receiving of that Divine oracle, which presently upon his awaking he uttered. Like that "deep sleep" which God sent upon Abraham, when by the spirit of prophecy he would acquaint him with those events which were to happen to his posterity some ages after ^g.

Thus Tertullian, speaking of the sleep that fell upon Adam, and the words that he afterwards uttered, "There fell an ecstasy upon him, even the power of the Holy Ghost, causing him to prophesy ^h." And we find the same notion expressly delivered by many others of the ancients ⁱ. Let me add hereto, that Philo also, the most ancient and learned writer among the Jews, acknowledgeth this sleep on Adam to have been an ecstasy, interpreting the ecstasy to have been a kind of recess of the soul from the body, and bodily senses, in order to the more calm and serene contemplation of Divine things. For his words, speaking of this place of Moses ^k, are these; "God sent," saith he, "an ecstasy upon Adam, and laid him into a deep sleep; understanding by an ecstasy the quiet and tranquillity of the mind. For the sleep of the mind is the waking of the senses, as also the waking of the mind is the leisure of the senses ^l."

Thus you see, that if we look no farther than the bare literal account of Moses concerning the first man, we have no reason at all to conceive him a creature so merely animal, so wholly void of the Spirit of God, as the low and plainly animal discourse of divers learned men hath represented him; yea, that we have great reasons to entertain a quite contrary conception of him; and that if we regard the sense of the Catholic Church, both before and since our Saviour, it ought to be held for certain,

^g Gen. xv. 12, &c. See Acts x. 10. and xxii. 17.

^h Cecidit ecstasis super illum, Sancti Spiritus vis, operatrix prophetiæ. Lib. de Anima, c. 11. n. 144. Vide et c. 21. ejusdem libri.

ⁱ See especially St. Austin, lib. ix. de Genes. ad lit. cap. ult. and Bernard. Serm. II. Septuages.

^k Lib. Quis rerum Divin. Hæres. p. 517.

^l Ἐπέβαλε γὰρ ὁ θεὸς, φησιν, ἐκστασιν ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀδὰμ, καὶ ὑπνωσεν, ἐκστασιν τὴν ἡρεμίαν καὶ ἡσυχίαν τοῦ νοῦ παραλαμβάνων· ὕπνος γὰρ νοῦ, γρηγόρεσις ἐστὶν αἰσθήσεως· καὶ γὰρ αἱ γρηγόρειαι τῆς διαβολῆς, αἰσθήσεως ἀπραξία.

that the protoplast was in the state of integrity endowed with a principle of the divine life, or the gift of the Spirit of God, in order to the attaining of that celestial bliss, to which also in the gracious purpose of God he was designed.

You will now (I hope) excuse me, that I have dwelt so long in the demonstration of these hypotheses, stepping aside at every turn to meet with those little scruples which have been raised against them by adversaries of different interests. For I gave you fair warning beforehand, that you were to expect this trouble from me, and told you my reason, viz. that I look on them as the two main pillars of the Catholic doctrine, Concerning the Fall of the first Man, and the sad Consequents thereof as to his Posterity. And I do again profess, that I can by no means understand how that doctrine can be intelligibly explained, or rationally defended, otherwise than upon the foundation of the said Hypotheses. For if it be once granted, that man in his first and best estate was a creature merely animal, I challenge any man to shew me, wherein that great fall of mankind, of which the scriptures and the writings of the Catholic Doctors from the days of the Apostles to our present age so loudly ring, can be imagined to consist?

Qui cadit in terram non habet unde cadat.

According to this hypothesis, Man before the fall was but an earthly animal creature, and he is no worse now since the fall. Besides, you will find in the sequel of my discourse, that these principles have a mighty influence on the determination of divers important questions in debate betwixt my adversary and myself, and that upon the admission of these, some of the main foundations of his book written against me, are not only shaken but utterly subverted: which consideration, I confess, induced me to be much larger in explaining these things than otherwise I should have been, if I had intended only an answer to your letter. In the mean time, (that you may not live wholly upon promises, but see something of performance,) I shall in general shew you the great use of this doctrine in three considerable instances.

First, You may gather hence a clear solution of that question so hotly agitated amongst modern Divines; "Whether the

original righteousness of the first man was supernatural^m?" For the meaning of this question, if it signify any thing to any considerable purpose, is clearly this; whether Adam in the state of integrity needed a supernatural principle or power, in order to the performing of such a righteousness, as, through the gracious acceptance of God, should have been available to an eternal and celestial life and happiness? And the question being thus stated, ought to be held in the affirmative, if the consentient determination of the Church of God may be allowed its due weight in the balance of our judgments. There is a sense indeed, wherein we may safely acknowledge the original righteousness of the first man to have been natural, and it is this; that he received the principle of that righteousness *a nativitate sua*, "from his nativity," in his very creation, and together with his nature. For this (as we have above shewn) is generally confessed by the Catholic Doctors, who teach us, that Adam received the principle of the natural and the divine life at the same time, and by the same insufflation of God, mentioned Gen. ii. 7. Others declare themselves, in their affirming the original righteousness of the first man to have been natural, to mean no more than this, That Adam had by nature a remote power of performing such righteousness, but that he needed a supernatural assistance to bring this power into act; that is, (to speak more plainly,) he had natural faculties capable of doing this, if excited, raised, elevated, and assisted by a Divine grace. And who in his wits will deny this? Yet thus the famous Tilenus (even before he turned to the Remonstrants, and when he was yet in flagrant favour with his countrymen) explains this doctrineⁿ, using this similitude; "As the vine doth not therefore want a natural power to bring forth wine, because it needs those external helps of the sun, and rain, and culture, to its actual bringing forth: so also in Adam, the rectitude of his will, and the good order of his affections, was nevertheless natural, although, *in actu secundo*, it was excited and assisted by the help of moving grace^o."

^m An justitia originalis fuerit primo homini supernaturalis?

ⁿ Syntag. Disput. Theolog. par. i. disp. 32. n. 35—38.

^o Quomodo viti non propterea caret vi naturali ad proferendum vinum, quod externis illi opus est auxiliis, puta

sole, pluvia, et cultura, ut actu proferat: Sic et in Adamo non ideo naturalis non fuit voluntatis rectitudo, et affectum *εὐταξία*, licet in actu secundo, gratiæ moventis auxilio excitaretur et adjuvaretur.

Now this similitude (I say) we willingly admit, allowing for the difference betwixt natural and free agents. For hereby is signified, that Adam in the state of integrity had naturally, and without the aid of the Divine Spirit, no more power to perform a righteousness available to eternal life, than the vine hath to bring forth wine, without the warm influence of the sun, and the dew of heaven, and dressing: which concession grants as much as any sober man will contend for. And yet the same learned man a little after doth plainly enough confess, that the doctrine of those Protestant writers, that affirm the original righteousness of the first man to have been natural, cannot be excused from Pelagianism, unless it be thus explained.

Hence some, even of the systematic writers, stick not in direct terms to acknowledge, That those perfections, wherein the original righteousness of the first man is granted by all to consist, were supernatural to him. I shall produce one testimony, which may be *instar omnium*, and it is the testimony of Wollebius, whose system hath been so thumbed by young students in theology. His words^p are these; “The gifts belonging to the image of God, were partly natural, partly supernatural. The natural were the soul, a simple and invisible substance, and its faculties, viz. understanding and will. The supernatural were, the clearness of the understanding^q, the liberty and rectitude of the will, the conformity of the appetites or affections, the immortality of the whole man, &c.^r” But enough of this.

Secondly, Upon the foundations laid, you may raise an impregnable argument to evince the absolute necessity of Divine grace in man fallen, in order to the performance of that righteousness which is required unto his eternal salvation, against the heresy of Pelagius. The argument is by the above-mentioned learned man, Daniel Tilenus^s, formed *a majori ad minus* thus, “If the natural man, even in the state of integrity, could not of himself attain to a supernatural end, with what face can he now, in the state of corruption, arrogate to himself so

^p Christ. Theol. l. i. c. 8. Can. 8—10.

^q Viz. In reference to supernatural acts or objects.

^r Imaginis Dei dona partim naturalia, partim supernaturalia erant. Naturalia erant anima simplex ac invisibilis substantia, ejusque facultates, intellectus

nimirum et voluntas. Supernaturalia erant, intellectus claritas, voluntatis libertas et rectitudo, appetituum seu affectuum conformitas, totius hominis immortalitas, &c.

^s Syntag. Disput. Theolog. par. i. disp. 34. n. 24.

great a strength and confidence[†]?" But what need I fly to the testimonies of single authors, especially moderns? We find this argument expressly made use of by the Council of Orange, purposely called against the heresy of Pelagius reviving in France[‡]. The words of the holy Fathers, assembled in that Council, are these; "The nature of man, if it had remained in that integrity wherein it was created, could by no means have saved itself without the assistance of its Creator. Wherefore seeing, without the grace of God, it could not keep the salvation which it had received, how can it possibly without the grace of God recover that which it hath lost[×]?"

Lastly, You may from that large account which I have given you of the sense of antiquity, as to the last hypothesis, most certainly assure yourself how unjust a charge that is, which some bold men[§] have fastened on all the Christian writers before Pelagius, especially on those that flourished within the first three centuries; namely, that they held the same doctrine, which was afterwards condemned by the Church as heretical in Pelagius; exalting the *τὸ αὐτεξούσιον* into the throne of the Divine Spirit, and asserting a sufficiency of man's natural powers in his lapsed estate, without the grace of God, to perform those things which conduce unto eternal life. For you may now evidently discern, that those excellent persons were so far from this persuasion, that they believed an absolute necessity of a divine and supernatural principle, even in man entire, to raise and elevate his natural powers unto the attainment of so high an end. And this notion you no where find more clearly delivered, than it is by the writers of the first three hundred years. Many learned men have, with a laudable zeal, stood up in vindication of the holy Fathers and Martyrs from this foul calumny, and have

[†] Si homo ψυχικὸς, ne in integra quidem natura, supernaturalem finem per se erat assecturus; qua fronte tantum roboris, aut fiducia, sibi arroget corruptus?

[‡] Concil. Arausian. c. 19. inter Opera August. tom. vii. p. 614. edit. Paris. 1635.

[×] Natura humana, etiamsi in illa integritate, in qua est condita, permaneret, nullo modo seipsam, creatore suo non adjuvante, servaret. Unde cum sine

gratia Dei salutem non possit eustodire, quam accepit, quomodo sine Dei gratia poterit reparare, quod perdidit?

[§] Among the rest, our countryman Mr. Baxter tells us, "Yet the truth is, most, if not all the Fathers of the first two hundred or three hundred years do speak in a language seeming to lean strongly that way.—But the plain truth is, till Pelagius's days, all spoke like Pelagians." *Saints' Rest*, part i. p. 154.

more than sufficiently done it, by amassing many testimonies out of their writings, wherein they expressly acknowledge an absolute necessity of the Divine grace, and the operation of the Holy Spirit in lapsed man, in order to his eternal salvation. But none of them (that I have yet met with) hath made use of this notion, which yet runs (as it were) in a continued vein through the writings of all the primitive Fathers, and strikes (as we but now observed) at the very heart of the Pelagian heresy.

Thus I have returned a very large answer to the enquiry, concerning the covenant of life made with man in the state of integrity, much larger, I believe, than was expected, and, I am sure, than I at first intended. For I have scarce, I think, omitted any thing which might be said of that covenant with any certainty, either from the express dictates of the sacred oracles, or from the consent of the Catholic Church, the best guide we can follow in those cases wherein the Holy Scriptures speak less plainly.

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